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TAYLOR INSTITUTION.

BEQUEATHED

TO THE UNIVERSITY

BY

ROBERT FINCH, M. A.

OF BALLIOL COLLEGE.

2

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

A

POEM,

IN

FOUR BOOKS.

To which is added

SAMSON AGONISTES;

AND

POEMS upon ſeveral OCCASIONS.

With a Tractate of Education.

The AUTHOR

JOHN MILTON.

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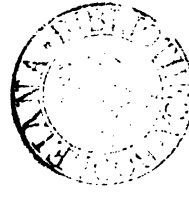

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PARA-

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

BOOK I.

I WHO ere while the happy Garden ſung,
By one Man's Diſobedience loſt, now ſing
Recover'd Paradiſe to all Mankind,
By one Man's firm Obedience fully try'd
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And *Eden* rais'd in the waſte Wilderneſs.
Thou, Spirit, who led'ſt this glorious Eremite
Into the Deſart, his victorious Field
Againſt the ſpiritual Foe, and brought'ſt him thence
By proof th' undoubted Son of God, inſpire,
As thou art wont, my prompted Song, elſe mute,
And bear through height or depth of Nature's bounds
With proſperous wing full ſumm'd, to tell of deeds
Above Heroic, though in ſecret done,
And unrecorded left through many an Age,
Worthy t'have not remain'd ſo long unſung.

Now had the great Proclaimer with a voice
More awful than the ſound of Trumpet, cry'd
Repentance, and Heaven's Kingdom nigh at hand
To all Baptiz'd: to his great Baptiſm flock'd,
With awe the Regions round, and with them came
From *Nazareth* the Son of *Joſeph* deem'd,
To the flood *Jordan* came, as then obſcure,
Unmarkt, unknown; but him the Baptiſt ſoon
Deſcry'd, divinely warn'd, and witneſs bore
As to his worthier, and would have reſign'd
To him his Heavenly Office, nor was long
His witneſs unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd
Heav'n open'd, and in likeneſs of a Dove
The Spirit deſcended, while the Father's voice
From Heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.

That heard the Adverſary, who roving ſtill
About the World, at that aſſembly fam'd
Would not be laſt, and with the voice divine
Nigh thunder-ſtruck, th'exalted Man, to whom
Such high atteſt was giv'n, a while ſurvey'd
With wonder, then with envy fraught, and rage,
Flies to his Place, nor reſts, but in mid air
To Council ſummons all his mighty Peers,
Within thick Clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,
A gloomy Conſiſtory; and them amidſt
With looks aghaſt and ſad he thus beſpake.

O ancient Pow'rs of Air and this wide World,
For much more willingly I mention Air,
This our old Conqueſt, than remember Hell
Our hated habitation; well ye know
How many Ages, as the years of Men,

This

This Univerſe we have poſſeſt, and rul'd
In manner at our will th' affairs of Earth,
Since *Adam* and his facil Conſort *Eve*
Loſt Paradiſe deceiv'd by me, though ſince
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the Seed of *Eve*
Upon my head; long the decrees of Heav'n
Delay, for longeſt time to him is ſhort;
And now too ſoon for us the circling hours
This dreaded time have compaſt, wherein we
Muſt bide the ſtroak of that long threatn'd wound,
At leaſt if ſo we can, and by the Head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infring'd, our freedom and our being
In this fair Empire won of Earth and Air;
For this ill news I bring, the Woman's Seed
Deſtin'd to this, is late of Woman born.
His Birth to our juſt fear gave no ſmall cauſe,
But his growth now to youth's full flower diſplaying
All virtue, grace, and wiſdom to atchieve
Things higheſt, greateſt, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is ſent Harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the conſecrated ſtream
Pretends to waſh off ſin, and fit them ſo
Purifi'd to receive him pure, or rather
To do him honour as their King: all come,
And he himſelf among them was baptiz'd,
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The Teſtimony of Heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the Nations may not doubt; I ſaw

The Prophet do him reverence, on him riſing
Out of the Water, Heav'n above the Clouds
Unfold her Cryſtal Doors, thence on his head
A perfect Dove deſcend, whate'er it meant,
And out of Heav'n the Sovereign voice I heard,
This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd.
His Mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the Monarchy of Heaven;
And what will he not do t' advance his Son?
His firſt-begot we know, and ſore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep;
Who this is we muſt learn, for Man he ſeems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpſes of his Father's glory ſhine.
Ye ſee our danger on the utmoſt edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But muſt with ſomething ſudden be oppos'd,
Not force, but well couch'd fraud, well woven ſnares,
Ere in the head of Nations he appear
Their King, their Leader, and Supream on Earth.
I, when no other durſt, ſole undertook
The diſmal expedition, to find out
And ruin *Adam*, and th'exploit perform'd
Succeſsfully; a calmer Voyage now
Will waft me; and the way found proſp'rous once,
Induces beſt to hope of like ſucceſs.
He ended, and his words impreſſion left
Of much amazement to th' infernal Crew,
Diſtracted and ſurpriz'd with deep diſmay
At theſe ſad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:

Un-

Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main Enterprize
To him their great Dictator, whoſe attempt
At firſt againſt mankind ſo well had thriv'd
In *Adam*'s overthrow, and led their march
From Hell's deep-vaulted Den to dwell in light,
Regents and Potentates, and Kings, yea Gods
Of many a pleaſant Realm and Province wide.
So to the Coaſt of *Jordan* he directs
His eaſy ſteps, girded with ſnaky wiles,
Where he might likelieſt find this new declar'd,
This Man of men, atteſted Son of God,
Temptation and all guile on him to try;
So to ſubvert whom he ſuſpected rais'd
To end his Reign on Earth ſo long enjoy'd:
But contrary, unweeting he fulfill'd
The purpos'd Counſel pre-ordain'd and fixt
Of the moſt High, who in full frequence bright
Of Angels, thus to *Gabriel* ſmiling ſpake.
Gabriel, this day by proof thou ſhalt behold,
Thou and all Angels converſant on Earth
With man or mens affairs, how I begin
To verify that ſolemn Meſſage late,
On which I ſent thee to the Virgin pure
In *Galilee*, that ſhe ſhould bear a Son
Great in Renown and call'd the Son of God;
Then toldſt her, doubting how theſe things could be
To her a Virgin, that on her ſhould come
The Holy Ghoſt, and the Power of the Higheſt
O'er-ſhadow her: this Man born and now up grown,
To ſhew him worthy of his Birth-Divine

And high Prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt and now assay
His utmost subtilty, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his Apostasie; he might have learnt
Less overweening, since he fail'd in *Job*,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a Man
Of female Seed, far abler to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell,
Winning by conquest what the first man lost,
By fallacy surpriz'd. But first I mean
To exercise him in the Wilderness,
There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death the two grand foes,
By Humiliation and strong Sufferance
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
That all the Angels and Æthereal Powers,
They now, and men hereafter may discern,
From what consummate virtue I have chose
This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
To earn Salvation for the Sons of men.

So spake th' Eternal Father, and all Heav'n
Admiring stood a space, then into Hymns
Burst forth, and in Celestial measures mov'd
Circling the Throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument.

Victory

Victory and Triumph to the Son of God
Now entering his great duel, not of Arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles.
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial Virtue, though untry'd,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
Allure, or terrifie, or undermine.
Be frustrate all ye stratagems of Hell,
And devilish machinations come to nought.

So they in Heav'n their Odes and Vigils tun'd:
Mean while the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodg'd in *Bethabara* where *John* baptiz'd,
Musing and much revolving in his breast,
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his God-like Office now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading,
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With solitude, till far from track of Men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He entred now the bordering desart wild,
And with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy meditation thus pursu'd.

O what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel my self, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd.
When I was yet a Child no childish play
To me was pleasing, all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do

What might be publick good; my self I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore above my years,
The Law of God I read and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that ere yet my age
Had measur'd twice six Years, at our great Feast
I went into the Temple, there to hear
The Teachers of our Law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own;
And was admir'd by all; yet this not all
To which my Spirit aspir'd, victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts, one while
To rescue *Israel* from the *Roman* Yoke,
Then to subdue and quell o'er all the earth
Brute violence and proud Tyrannick pow'r,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd:
Yet held it more humane, more heav'nly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make perswasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring Soul
Not wilfully mis-doing, but unaware
Mis-led; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoic'd,
And said to me apart, High are thy thoughts
O Son, but nourish them, and let them soar
To what heighth sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless Deeds express thy matchless Sire.
For know thou art no Son of mortal man,

Though

Though men eſteem thee low of parentage,
Thy Father is th' Eternal King, who rules
All Heav'n and Earth, Angels and Sons of men;
A meſſenger from God foretold thy Birth
Conceiv'd in me a Virgin, he foretold
Thou ſhould'ſt be great and ſit on *David*'s Throne,
And of thy Kingdom there ſhould be no end.
At thy Nativity a glorious Quire
Of Angels in the fields of *Bethlehem* ſung
To Shepherds watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Meſſiah now was born,
Where they might ſee him, and to thee they came,
Directed to the Manger where thou lay'ſt;
For in the Inn was left no better room:
A Star not ſeen before in Heav'n appearing
Guided the Wiſe Men thither from the Eaſt,
To honour thee with Incenſe, Myrrh and Gold,
By whoſe bright courſe led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy Star new grav'n in Heav'n,
By which they knew the King of *Iſrael* born.
Juſt *Simeon* and Prophetic *Anna* warn'd
By Viſion found thee in the Temple, and ſpake
Before the Altar and the veſted Prieſt,
Like things of thee to all that preſent ſtood.
This having heard, ſtraight I again revolv'd
The Law and Prophets, ſearching what was writ
Concerning the Meſſiah, to our Scribes
Known partly, and ſoon found of whom they ſpake
I am; this chiefly, that my way muſt lie
Through many a hard aſſay even to the death,
Ere I the promis'd Kingdom can attain,

Or work Redemption for mankind, whose sins
Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
Yet neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
The time prefix'd I waited, when behold!
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah and his way prepare.
I as all others to his Baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd
Me him (for it was shewn him so from Heav'n)
Me him whose Harbinger he was; and first
Refus'd on me his Baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won:
But as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heav'n open'd her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a Dove;
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heav'n, pronounc'd me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes
The Authority which I deriv'd from Heav'n.
And now by some strong motion I am led
Into this Wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet, perhaps I need not know;
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.
So spake our Morning Star, then in his rise,
And looking round on every side beheld
A pathless Desart, dusk with horrid shades;

The

The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by human ſteps untrod:
And he ſtill on was led, but with ſuch thoughts
Accompanied of things paſt and to come,
Lodg'd in his breaſt, as well might recommend
Such Solitude before choiceſt Society.
Full forty days he paſs'd, whether on hill,
Sometimes, anon in ſhady vale, each night
Under the covert of ſome antient Oak
Or Cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in one Cave, is not reveal'd;
Nor taſted human food, nor hunger felt
Till thoſe days ended, hunger'd then at laſt
Among wild Beaſts: they at his ſight grew mild,
Nor ſleeping him nor waking harm'd, his walk
The fiery Serpent fled, and noxious Worm,
The Lion and fierce Tiger glar'd aloof.
But now an aged man in rural weeds,
Following, as ſeem'd, the queſt of ſome ſtray Ewe,
Or wither'd ſticks to gather, which might ſerve
Againſt a Winter's day when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet return'd from Field at Eve,
He ſaw approach, who firſt with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd ſpake.
Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place
So far from path or road of men, who paſs
In Troop or Caravan, for ſingle none
Durſt ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
His Carcaſe, pin'd with hunger and with drought.
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou ſeem'ſt the Man, whom late
Our

Our new baptizing Prophet at the Ford
Of *Jordan* honour'd ſo, and call'd the Son
Of God: I ſaw and heard, for we ſometimes
Who dwell this wilde, conſtrain'd by want, come forth
To Town or Village nigh (nigheſt is far)
Where ought we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happens new; Fame alſo finds us out.
To whom the Son of God. Who brought me hither
Will bring me hence, no other Guide I ſeek.
By Miracle he may, reply'd the Swain,
What other way I ſee not; for we here
Live on tough roots and ſtubs, to thirſt inur'd
More than the Camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much miſery and hardſhip born;
But if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of theſe hard ſtones be made thee Bread;
So ſhalt thou ſave thyſelf, and us relieve
With Food, whereof we wretched ſeldom taſte.
He ended, and the Son of God reply'd:
Think'ſt thou ſuch force in Bread; is it not written
(For I diſcern thee other than thou ſeem'ſt)
Man lives not by bread only but each Word
Proceeding from the mouth of God? who fed
Our Fathers here with Manna; in the Mount
Moſes was forty days, nor eat nor drank,
And forty days *Elijah* without food
Wandred this barren waſte, the ſame I now:
Why doſt thou then ſuggeſt to me diſtruſt,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?
Whom thus anſwer'd th' Arch-Fiend, now undiſ-
'Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate, [guis'd.
Who

Who leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy Station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
By rigour unconniving, but that oft
Leaving my dolorous Prison I enjoy
Large Liberty to round this Globe of Earth,
Or range in the Air; nor from the Heav'n of Heav'ns
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the Sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands *Uzzaean Job*
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth;
And when to all his Angels he propos'd
To draw the proud King *Ahab* into fraud,
That he might fall in *Ramoth*, they demurring,
I undertook that Office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering Prophets glibb'd with lyes
To his destruction, as I had in charge,
For what he bids I do; though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be belov'd of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous, I should so have lost all sense.
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee, and approach thee, whom I know
Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy Wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind: why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence, by them

I lost

I loſt not what I loſt, rather by them
I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell
Co-partner in theſe Regions of the World,
If not diſpoſer; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by preſages and ſigns,
And anſwers, oracles, portents, and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they ſay excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my miſery and wo.
At firſt it may be; but long ſince with wo
Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof,
That fellowſhip in pain divides not ſmart,
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load;
Small conſolation then, were man adjoin'd:
This wounds me moſt (what can it leſs) that Man,
Man fall'n ſhall be reſtor'd, I never more.

To whom our Saviour ſternly thus reply'd:
Deſervedly thou griev'ſt, compos'd of lyes
From the beginning, and in lyes wilt end;
Who boaſt'ſt releaſe from Hell, and leave to come
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns: thou com'ſt indeed,
As a poor miſerable captive thrall,
Comes to the place where he before had ſat
Among the Prime in Splendor, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, ſhun'd,
A ſpectacle of ruin or of ſcorn
To all the Hoſt of Heav'n; the happy place
Imparts to thee no happineſs, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment, repreſenting
Loſt bliſs, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in Hell than when in Heav'n.

But

But thou art ſerviceable to Heav'ns King.
Wilt thou impute t'obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleaſure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to miſdeem
Of righteous *Job*, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions? but his patience won.
The other ſervice was thy choſen taſk,
To be a lyar in four hundred mouths;
For lying is thy ſuſtenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'ſt to truth; all Oracles
By thee are giv'n, and what confeſt more true
Among the Nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing ſomewhat true to vent more lyes.
But what have been thy anſwers, what but dark,
Ambiguous, and with double ſenſe deluding,
Which they who aſk'd have ſeldom underſtood,
And not well underſtood as good not known?
Who ever by conſulting at thy ſhrine
Return'd the wiſer, or the more inſtruct
To fly or follow what concern'd him moſt,
And run not ſooner to his fatal ſnare?
For God hath juſtly giv'n the Nations up
To thy Deluſions, juſtly, ſince they fell
Idolatrous; but when his purpoſe is
Among them to declare his Providence
To thee not known, whence haſt thou then thy truth,
But from him or his Angels preſident
In ev'ry Province, who themſelves diſdaining
T' approach thy Temples, give thee in command
What to the ſmalleſt tittle thou ſhalt ſay
To thy Adorers? thou with trembling fear,

Or

Or like a fawning Paraſite obey'ſt;
Then to thyſelf aſcrib'ſt the truth foretold.
But this thy glory ſhall be ſoon retrench'd;
No more ſhalt thou by oracling abuſe
The Gentiles; henceforth Oracles are ceas'd,
And thou no more with Pomp and Sacrifice
Shalt be inquir'd at *Delphos* or elſewhere,
At leaſt in vain, for they ſhall find thee mute.
God hath now ſent his living Oracle
Into the World to teach his final will,
And ſends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell
In pious Hearts, an inward Oracle
To all truth requiſite for men to know.
So ſpake our Saviour; but the ſubtle Fiend,
Though inly ſtung with anger and diſdain,
Diſſembled, and his Anſwer ſmooth return'd.
Sharply thou haſt inſiſted on rebuke,
And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
But miſery hath wreſted from me; where
Eaſily canſt thou find one miſerable,
And not inforc'd oft-times to part from truth,
If it may ſtand him more in ſtead to lye,
Say and unſay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord;
From thee I can and muſt ſubmiſs endure
Check or reproof, and glad t'eſcape ſo quit.
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue diſcours'd, pleaſing to th'ear,
And tuneable as Silvan Pipe or Song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? moſt men admire
Virtue,

Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
To hear thee when I come, (ſince no man comes)
And talk at leaſt, tho' I deſpair t' attain.
Thy Father, who is holy, wiſe and pure,
Suffers the Hypocrite or Atheous Prieſt
To tread his Sacred Courts, and miniſter
About his Altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing; and vouchſaf'd his voice
To *Balaam* Reprobate, a Prophet yet
Inſpir'd; diſdain not ſuch acceſs to me.
To whom our Saviour with unalter'd brow:
Thy coming hither, though I know thy ſcope,
I bid not or forbid; do as thou find'ſt
Permiſſion from above; thou canſt not more.
He added not; and Satan bowing low
His gray diſſimulation, diſappear'd
Into thin Air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her ſullen wings to double-ſhade
The Deſart, Fowls in their clay neſts were couch'd;
And now wild beaſts come forth the Woods to roam.

The End of the Firſt Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

BOOK II.

MEAN while the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
At *Jordan* with the Baptiſt, and had ſeen
Him whom they heard ſo late expreſly call'd
Jeſus Meſſiah Son of God declar'd,
And on that high Authority had believ'd,
And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd, I mean
Andrew and *Simon*, famous after known,
With others, though in Holy Writ not nam'd,
Now miſſing him their Joy ſo lately found,
So lately found, and ſo abruptly gone,
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And as the days increas'd, increas'd their doubt:
Sometimes they thought he might only be ſhewn,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moſes was in the Mount, and miſſing long;
And the great *Thiſbite* who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heav'n, yet once again to come.

There-

Therefore as thoſe young Prophets then with care
Sought loſt *Elijah*, ſo in each place theſe
Nigh to *Bethabara*; in *Jericho*
The City of Palms, *Ænon*, and *Salim* old,
Macherus, and each Town or City wall'd
On this ſide the broad lake *Gennaret*,
Or in *Peræa*, but return'd in vain.
Then on the bank of *Jordan*, by a Creek,
Where Winds with Reeds and Oſiers whiſp'ring play,
Plain Fiſhermen, no greater men them call,
Cloſe in a Cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loſs and plaints out-breath'd.
Alas, from that high hope to what relapſe
Unlook'd for are we fall'n! our Eyes beheld
Meſſiah certainly now come, ſo long
Expected of our Fathers; we have heard
His words, his wiſdom full of grace and truth;
Now, now, for ſure, deliverance is at hand,
The Kingdom ſhall to *Iſrael* be reſtor'd:
Thus we rejoic'd, but ſoon our Joy is turn'd
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of *Iſrael*,
Send thy Meſſiah forth, the time is come;
Behold the Kings of th'Earth how they oppreſs
Thy choſen, to what heighth their Pow'r unjuſt
They have exalted, and behind them caſt
All fear of thee; ariſe and vindicate
Thy glory, free thy people from their yoke:

But

But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him
By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown
In publick, and with him we have convers'd;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his Providence; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence:
Soon we shall see our hope, or joy return.
Thus they out of their plaints new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought:
But to his mother *Mary*, when she saw
Others return'd from Baptism, not her Son,
Nor left at *Jordan*, tidings of him none; [pure,
Within her breast, though calm; her breast, though
Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad.
O what avails me now that honour high
To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute,
Hail highly favour'd, among Women blest;
While I to sorrows am no less advanc'd,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other Women, by the birth I bore;
In such a season born when scarce a Shed
Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
From the bleak air; a Stable was our warmth,
A Manger his, yet soon enforc'd to fly
Thence into *Egypt*, till the murd'rous King
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
With Infant-blood the streets of *Bethlehem*;
From *Egypt* home return'd, in *Nazareth*

Hath

Hath been our dwelling many years, his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little ſuſpicious to any King; but now
Full grown to Man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
By *John* the Baptiſt, and in public ſhown,
Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice:
I look'd for ſome great change; to Honour? no,
But trouble, as old *Simeon* plain foretold,
That to the fall and riſing he ſhould be
Of many in *Iſrael*, and to a ſign
Spoken againſt, that through my very Soul
A ſword ſhall pierce, this is my favour'd lot,
My Exaltation to Afflictions high;
Afflicted I may be, it ſeems, and bleſt;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now? ſome great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he ſcarce had ſeen,
I loſt him, but ſo found, as well I ſaw
He could not loſe himſelf; but went about
His Father's buſineſs; what he meant I mus'd,
Since underſtand; much more his abſence now
Thus long to ſome great purpoſe he obſcures.
But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
My heart hath been a ſtore-houſe long of things
And ſayings laid up, portending ſtrange events.
Thus *Mary* pond'ring oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had paſs'd
Since firſt her Salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:
The while her Son tracing the Deſart wild,
Sole, but with holieſt Meditations fed,

Into

Into himself defcended, and at once
All his great work to come before him fet;
How to begin, how to accomplifh beft
His end of being on Earth, and Miffion high.
For Satan with fly preface to return
Had left him vacant, and with fpeed was gone
Up to the middle Region of thick Air,
Where all his Potentates in Council fate;
There without fign of boaft, or fign of joy,
Sollicitous and blank he thus began.
Princes, Heav'n's ancient Sons, Æthereal Thrones,
Demonian Spirits now, from th' Element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
Pow'rs of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath,
So may we hold our place and thefe mild feats
Without new trouble; fuch an Enemy
Is rifen to invade us, whom no lefs
Threatens than our expulfion down to Hell;
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Confenting in full frequence was impower'd,
Have found him, view'd him, taſted him, but find
Far other labour to be undergon
Than when I dealt with *Adam* firſt of Men,
Though *Adam* by his Wife's allurement fell;
However to this Man inferior far,
If he be Man by Mother's fide at leaſt,
With more than human gifts from Heav'n adorn'd,
Perfections abſolute, Graces divine,
And amplitude of mind to greateſt Deeds.
Therefore I am return'd, leſt confidence
Of my ſucceſs with *Eve* in Paradiſe

De-

Deceive ye to perſuaſion over-ſure
Of like ſucceeding here; I ſummon all
Rather to be in readineſs, with hand
Or counſel to aſſiſt; leſt I who erſt
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.
So ſpake th' old Serpent doubting, and from all
With clamour was aſſur'd their utmoſt aid
At his command; when from amidſt them roſe
Belial, the diſſoluteſt Spirit that fell,
The ſenſualleſt, and, after *Aſmodai*,
The fleſhlieſt Incubus; and thus adviſ'd.
Set women in his eye, and in his walk,
Among daughters of men the faireſt found;
Many are in each Region paſſing fair
As the noon Sky; more like to Goddeſſes
Than mortal Creatures, graceful and diſcreet,
Expert in am'rous Arts, enchanting Tongues
Perſuaſive, Virgin majeſty with mild
And ſweet allay'd, yet terrible t'approach,
Skill'd to retire, and in retiring draw
Hearts after them, tangl'd in amorous Nets.
Such object hath the pow'r to ſoft'n and tame
Severeſt temper, ſmooth the rugged'ſt brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope diſſolve,
Draw out with credulous deſire, and lead
At will the manlieſt, reſoluteſt breaſt,
As the Magnetic hardeſt Iron draws.
Women, when nothing elſe, beguil'd the heart
Of wiſeſt *Solomon*, and made him build,
And made him bow to the Gods of his Wives.
To whom quick anſwer Satan thus return'd:

Belial,

Belial, in much uneven ſcale thou weigh'ſt
All others by thyſelf, becauſe of old
Thou thyſelf doat'dſt on woman-kind, admiring
Their ſhape, their colour, and attractive grace:
None are, thou think'ſt, but taken with ſuch toys.
Before the Flood thou with thy luſty Crew,
Falſe-titled Sons of God, roaming the Earth,
Caſt wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupled with them, and begot a race.
Have we not ſeen, or by relation heard,
In Courts and Regal Chambers how thou lurk'dſt,
In Wood or Grove by moſſie Fountain ſide,
In Valley or green Meadow to way-lay
Some Beauty rare, *Caliſto*, *Clymene*,
Daphne, or *Semele*, *Antiopa*,
Or *Amymone*, *Syrinx*, many more
Too long, then lay'dſt thy ſcapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, *Neptune*, *Jupiter*, or *Pan*,
Satyr, or Fawn, or Silvan? But theſe haunts
Delight not all; among the Sons of Men,
How many have with a ſmile made ſmall account
Of beauty and her lures, eaſily ſcorn'd
All her aſſaults, on worthier things intent?
Remember that *Pellean* Conqueror,
A Youth, how all the Beauties of the Eaſt
He ſlightly view'd, and ſlightly overpaſs'd;
How he ſirnam'd of *Africa* diſmiſs'd
In his prime youth the fair *Iberian* Maid.
For *Solomon*, he liv'd at eaſe, and full
Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
Higher deſign than to enjoy his State;

Thence

Thence to the bait of Women lay expos'd:
But he whom we attempt is wiſer far
Than *Solomon*, of more exalted mind,
Made and ſet wholly on th' accompliſhment
Of greateſt things; what Woman will you find,
Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leiſure will vouchſafe an eye
Of fond deſire? or ſhould ſhe confident,
As ſitting Queen ador'd on beauty's Throne,
Deſcend with all her winning charms begirt
T' enamour, as the Zone of *Venus* once
Wrought that effect on *Jove*, ſo Fables tell;
How would one look from his Majeſtick brow,
Seated as on the top of Virtue's hill,
Diſcount'nance her deſpis'd, and put to rout
All her array, her female pride deject,
Or turn to rev'rent awe? for Beauty ſtands
In th' admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; ceaſe t'admire, and all her Plumes
Fall flat and ſhrink into a trivial toy,
At every ſudden ſlighting quite abaſht:
Therefore with manlier objects we muſt try
His conſtancy, with ſuch as have more ſhew
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praiſe,
Rocks whereon greateſt Men have oftest wreck'd;
Or that which only ſeems to ſatisfy
Lawful deſires of Nature, not beyond.
And now I know he hungers where no food
Is to be found in the wide Wilderneſs;
The reſt commit to me, I ſhall let paſs
No advantage, and his ſtrength as oft aſſay.

He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim:
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of Spirits likest to himself in guile
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active Scene
Of various Persons each to know his part:
Then to the Desart takes with these his flight;
Where still from shade to shade the Son of God
After forty days fasting had remain'd,
Now hungring first, and to himself thus said:

Where will this end? four times ten days I've pass'd
Wandring this woody Maze, and human food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that Fast
To Virtue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here: if Nature need not,
Or God support Nature without repast
Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
Can satisfie that need some other way,
Tho' hunger still remain: so it remain
Without this body's wasting, I content me,
And from the sting of Famine fear no harm,
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts that feed
Me hungring more to do my Father's will.

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept
And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, Nature's refreshment sweet;

He

He thought, he by the Brook of *Cherith* ſtood
And ſaw the Ravens with their horny beaks
Food to *Elijah* bringing even and morn, [brought:
Tho rav'nous, taught t'abſtain from what they
He ſaw the Prophet alſo how he fled
Into the Deſart, and how there he ſlept
Under a Juniper; then how awak'd,
He found his ſupper on the coals prepar'd,
And by the Angel was bid riſe and eat,
And eat the ſecond time after repoſe,
The ſtrength whereof ſuffic'd him forty daye;
Sometimes that with *Elijah* he partook,
Or as a gueſt with *Daniel* at his Pulſe.
Thus wore out night, and now the Herald Lark
Left his ground-neſt, high tow'ring to deſcry
The morn's approach, and greet her with his Song:
As lightly from his graſſie couch up roſe
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Faſting he went to ſleep, and faſting wak'd.
Up to a hill anon his ſteps he rear'd,
From whoſe high top to ken the Proſpect round,
If Cottage were in view, Sheep-cote or Herd;
But Cottage, Herd, or Sheep-cote none he ſaw,
Only 'n a bottom ſaw a pleaſant Grove,
With chaunt of tuneful Birds reſounding loud;
Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
To reſt at noon, and enter'd ſoon the ſhade
High rooft, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
That open'd in the midſt a woody Scene;
Nature's own work it ſeem'd, (Nature taught Art)
And to a ſuperſtitious eye the haunt

Of Wood-Gods and Wood-Nymphs; he view'd it
When ſuddenly a man before him ſtood, [round,
(Not ruſtic as before, but ſeemlier clad,
As one in City, Court, or Palace bred)
And with fair ſpeech theſe words to him addreſs'd.
With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild ſolitude ſo long ſhould bide,
Of all things deſtitute, and, well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of ſome note,
As ſtory tells, have trod this Wilderneſs;
The fugitive Bond-woman with her Son
Out-caſt *Nebaioth*, yet found here relief
By a providing Angel; all the race
Of *Iſrael* here had famiſh'd, had not God
Rain'd from Heav'n Manna, and that Prophet bold
Native of *Thebez* wandring here was fed
Twice by a voice inviting him to eat;
Of thee theſe forty days none hath regard,
Forty and more deſerted here indeed.
To whom thus Jeſus: What conclud'ſt thou hence?
They all had need, I as thou ſeeſt have none.
How haſt thou hunger then? Satan reply'd;
Tell me if Food were now before thee ſet,
Would'ſt thou not eat? Thereafter as I like
The giver, anſwer'd Jeſus. Why ſhould that
Cauſe thy refuſal, ſaid the ſubtle Fiend?
Haſt thou not right to all created things?
Owe not all Creatures by juſt right to thee
Duty and ſervice, not to ſtay till bid,
But tender all their pow'rs? nor mention I

Meats

Meats by the Law unclean, or offer'd firſt
To Idols, thoſe young *Daniel* could refuſe;
Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who
Would ſcruple that, with want oppreſt? Behold
Nature aſham'd, or, better to expreſs,
Troubled that thou ſhould'ſt hunger, hath purvey'd
From all the Elements her choiceſt ſtore
To treat thee as beſeems, and as her Lord,
With honour, only deign to ſit and eat.

He ſpake no dream; for as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes, beheld
In ample ſpace under the broadeſt ſhade
A Table richly ſpread, in Regal mode,
With diſhes pil'd, and meats of nobleſt ſort
And ſavour, Beaſts of chaſe, or Fowl of game,
In Paſtry-built, or from the ſpit, or boil'd,
Gris-amber-ſteam'd; all Fiſh from Sea or Shore,
Freſhet, or purling Brook, of ſhell or fin,
And exquiſiteſt name, for which was drain'd
Pontus and *Lucrine* Bay, and *Afric* Coaſt.
Alas, how ſimple, to theſe Cates compar'd,
Was that crude Apple that diverted *Eve!*
And at a ſtately ſide-board by the wine
That fragrant ſmell diffus'd, in order ſtood
Tall ſtripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
Than *Ganymed* or *Hylas*; diſtant more
Under the Trees now tripp'd, now ſolemn ſtood
Nymphs of *Diana*'s train, and *Naiades*
With fruits and flow'rs from *Amalthea*'s horn,
And Ladies of th' *Heſperides*, that ſeem'd
Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled ſince

Of Fairy Damsels met in forest wide
By Knights of *Logres*, or of *Lyones*,
Lancelot, or *Pelleas*, or *Pellenore*.
And all the while harmonious Airs were heard
Of chyming strings, or charming pipes; and winds
Of gentlest gale *Arabian* odours fann'd
From their soft wings, and *Flora*'s earliest smells.
Such was the splendor; and the Tempter now
His invitation earnestly renew'd.

What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
These are not fruits forbidden, no interdict
Defends the touching of these Viands pure;
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
All these are Spirits of Air, and Woods, and Springs,
Thy gentle Ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledg thee their Lord:
What doubt'st thou Son of God? sit down and eat.

To whom thus Jesus temp'rately reply'd:
Saidst thou not, that to all things I had right?
And who withholds my pow'r that right to use?
Shall I receive by gift, what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command?
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a Table in this Wilderness,
And call swift flights of Angels ministrant
Array'd in Glory on my Cup t'attend.
Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence
In vain, where no acceptance it can find,
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?

Thy

Thy pompous Delicacies I contemn,
And count thy ſpecious gifts no gifts, but guiles.
To whom thus anſwer'd Satan malecontent:
That I have alſo pow'r to give, thou feeſt;
If of that pow'r I bring thee voluntary
What I might have beſtow'd on whom I pleas'd,
And rather opportunely in this place
Choſe to impart to thy apparent need;
Why ſhouldſt thou not accept it? but I ſee
What I can do or offer is ſuſpect;
Of theſe things others quickly will diſpoſe,
Whoſe pains have earn'd the far fetcht ſpoil. With that
Both Table and Proviſion vaniſh'd quite
With ſound of Harpies wings, and Talons heard;
Only th' importune Tempter ſtill remain'd,
And with theſe Words his Temptation purſu'd.
By hunger, that each other Creature tames,
Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
Thy temperance invincible beſides,
For no allurement yields to appetite;
And all thy heart is ſet on high deſigns,
High actions; but wherewith to be atchiev'd?
Great acts require great means of enterpriſe.
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of Birth,
A Carpenter thy Father known, thyſelf
Bred up in poverty and ſtreights at home,
Loſt in a Deſart here, and hunger-bit:
Which way, or from what hope doſt thou aſpire
To greatneſs? whence Authority deriv'ſt?
What Followers, what Retinue canſt thou gain,

Or at thy heels the dizzy Multitude,
Longer than thou canſt feed them on thy coſt?
Mony brings Honour, Friends, Conqueſt and Realms.
What rais'd *Antipater* the Edomite,
And his Son *Herod* plac'd on *Judah*'s Throne,
(Thy Throne,) but Gold that got him puiſſant Friends?
Therefore, if at great things thou would'ſt arrive,
Get Riches firſt, get Wealth, and Treaſure heap,
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me:
Riches are mine, Fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While Virtue, Valour, Wiſdom ſit in want.
To whom thus Jeſus patiently reply'd:
Yet Wealth without theſe three is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd;
Witneſs thoſe antient Empires of the Earth,
In height of all their flowing wealths diſſolv'd:
But men endu'd with theſe, have oft attain'd
In loweſt poverty to higheſt deeds;
Gideon and *Jephtha*, and the Shepherd Lad,
Whoſe Offspring on the Throne of *Judah* ſat
So many Ages, and ſhall yet regain
That Seat, and reign in *Iſrael* without end.
Among the Heathen, (for throughout the World
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy Memorial) canſt thou not remember
Quintus, *Fabricius*, *Curius*, *Regulus*?
For I eſteem thoſe names of men ſo poor,
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
Riches, though offer'd from the hand of Kings.

And what in me ſeems wanting, but that I
May alſo in this poverty as ſoon
Accompliſh what they did, perhaps and more?
Extol not Riches then, the toyl of Fools,
The wiſe man's cumbrance, if not ſnare, more apt
To ſlacken Virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praiſe.
What if with like averſion I reject
Riches and Realms? yet not, for that a Crown,
Golden in ſhew, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and ſleepleſs nights
To him who wears the Regal Diadem,
When on his ſhoulders each man's burden lies:
For therein ſtands the Office of a King,
His Honour, Virtue, Merit and chief Praiſe,
That for the Publick all this weight he bears.
Yet he who reigns within himſelf, and rules
Paſſions, Deſires, and Fears, is more a King;
Which ev'ry wiſe and virtuous man attains:
And who attains not, ill aſpires to rule
Cities of men or head-ſtrong multitudes,
Subject himſelf to Anarchy within,
Or lawleſs Paſſions in him, which he ſerves.
But to guide Nations in the way of truth
By ſaving Doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and knowing worſhip God aright,
Is yet more Kingly; this attracts the Soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part:
That other o'er the body only reigns;
And oft by force, which to a gen'rous mind

So reigning, can be no ſincere delight.
Beſides, to give a Kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous, than to aſſume.
Riches are needleſs then, both for themſelves,
And for thy reaſon why they ſhould be ſought,
To gain a Scepter, oftest better miſs'd.

The End of the Second Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

BOOK III.

SO ſpake the Son of God; and Satan ſtood
A while as mute, confounded what to ſay,
What to reply, confuted and convinc'd
Of his weak arguing, and fallacious drift:
At length collecting all his Serpent wiles,
With ſoothing words renew'd, him thus accoſts:
I ſee thou know'ſt what is of uſe to know,
What beſt to ſay canſt ſay, to do canſt do:
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart
Contains of good, wiſe, juſt, the perfect ſhape.
Should Kings and Nations, from thy mouth conſult,
Thy Counſel would be as the Oracle
Urim and *Thummim*, thoſe oraculous gems
On *Aaron*'s breaſt, or tongue of Seers old
Infallible; or wert thou ſought to deeds
That might require th'array of war, thy ſkill
Of conduct would be ſuch, that all the world

Could

Could not ſuſtain thy Proweſs, or ſubſiſt
In battle, though againſt thy few in arms.
Theſe God-like Virtues wherefore doſt thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obſcure
In ſavage Wilderneſs? wherefore deprive
All Earth her wonder at thy Acts, thyſelf
The fame and glory; glory, the reward
That ſole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of moſt erected Spirits, moſt temper'd pure
Ætherial, who all pleaſures elſe deſpiſe,
All treaſures and all gain eſteem as droſs,
And dignities and pow'rs all but the higheſt?
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe; the ſon
Of *Macedonian Philip* had ere theſe
Won *Aſia*, and the Throne of *Cyrus* held
At his diſpoſe; young *Scipio* had brought down
The *Carthaginian* pride, young *Pompey* quell'd
The *Pontic* King, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirſt of glory, but augment.
Great *Julius*, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more enflam'd
With glory, wept that he had liv'd ſo long
Inglorious: But thou yet art not too late.
To whom our Saviour calmly thus reply'd.
Thou neither doſt perſuade me to ſeek wealth
For Empire's ſake, nor Empire to affect
For glory's ſake, by all thy argument.
For what is Glory but the blaze of Fame,
The People's praiſe, if always praiſe unmix'd?
And what the People but a herd confus'd,

A miſcellaneous rabble, who extol [praiſe?
Things vulgar, and well weigh'd ſcarce worth the
They praiſe and they admire they know not what;
And know not whom, but as one leads the other:
And what delight to be by ſuch extol'd,
To live upon their tongues, and be their talk,
Of whom to be diſprais'd were no ſmall praiſe?
His lot who dares be ſingularly good.
Th' intelligent among them and the wiſe
Are few, and glory ſcarce of few is rais'd.
This is true glory and renown, when God
Looking on th' Earth, with approbation marks
The juſt man, and divulges him through Heav'n
To all his Angels, who with true applauſe
Recount his praiſes; thus he did to *Job*,
When to extend his Fame through Heav'n and Earth
(As thou to thy reproach mayſt well remember)
He ask'd thee, haſt thou ſeen my ſervant *Job*?
Famous he was in Heav'n, on earth leſs known;
Where glory is falſe glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.
They err, who count it glorious to ſubdue
By Conqueſt far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in field great Battles win,
Great Cities by aſſault: What do theſe Worthies,
But rob and ſpoil, burn, ſlaughter, and enſlave
Peaceable Nations, neighbouring, or remote,
Made Captive, yet deſerving freedom more
Than thoſe their Conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin whereſo'er they rove,
And all the flouriſhing works of peace deſtroy;

Then

Then swell with Pride, and must be titled Gods,
Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
Worship'd with Temple, Priest and Sacrifice;
One is the Son of *Jove*, of *Mars* the other,
Till Conqu'ror Death discover them scarce men;
Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
Violent or shameful death their due reward?
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd
Without ambition, war, or violence;
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance. I mention still
Him whom thy wrongs with Saintly patience born,
Made famous in a land and times obscure;
Who names not now with honour patient *Job*?
Poor *Socrates* (who next more memorable?)
By what he taught and suffer'd for so doing,
For truth's sake suffering death unjust, lives now
Equal in fame to proudest Conquerors.
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,
Aught suffer'd; if young *African* for fame
His wasted Country freed from *Punic* rage,
The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
Shall I seek glory then, as vain Men seek
Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am.
To whom the Tempter murm'ring thus reply'd:
Think not so slight of glory, therein least
Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things

Orders

Orders and governs, not content in Heav'n
By all his Angels glorify'd, requires
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;
Above all Sacrifice, or hallow'd gift,
Glory he requires, and glory he receives
Promiscuous from all Nations, Jew, or Greek,
Or Barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;
From us his foes pronounc'd glory he exacts.

To whom our Saviour fervently reply'd:
And reason, since his word all things produc'd,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to shew forth his goodness, and impart
His good communicable t' ev'ry soul
Freely; of whom what could he less expect
Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompence
From them who could return him nothing else,
And not returning that would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
Hard recompence, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence.
But why should man seek glory? who of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
Who for so many benefits receiv'd,
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd;
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs:
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,

That

That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himſelf to glory will advance.
So ſpake the Son of God: and here again
Satan had not to anſwer, but ſtood ſtruck
With guilt of his own ſin; for he himſelf
Inſatiable of glory had loſt all:
Yet of another Plea bethought him ſoon.
Of glory, as thou wilt, ſaid he, ſo deem,
Worth or not worth the ſeeking, let it paſs:
But to a Kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To ſit upon thy Father *David*'s Throne;
By Mother's ſide thy Father; though thy right
Be now in pow'rful hands, that will not part
Eaſily from poſſeſſion won with arms.
Judæa now and all the promis'd land,
Reduc'd a Province under *Roman* yoke,
Obeys *Tiberius*; nor is always rul'd
With temp'rate ſway; oft have they violated
The Temple, oft the Law with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'ſt thou to regain
Thy right by ſitting ſtill, or thus retiring?
So did not *Machabæus*: he indeed
Retir'd unto the Deſart, but with arms;
And o'er a mighty King ſo oft prevail'd,
That by ſtrong hand his Family obtain'd,
Tho' Prieſts, the Crown, and *David*'s Throne uſurp'd,
With *Modin* and her ſuburbs once content.
If Kingdom move thee not, let move thee Zeal
And Duty; Zeal and Duty are not ſlow,
But on Occaſion's forelock watchful wait:

They

They themſelves rather are occaſion beſt;
Zeal of thy Father's houſe, Duty to free
Thy Country from her Heathen ſervitude;
So ſhalt thou beſt fulfil, beſt verifie
The Prophets old, who ſung thy endleſs reign,
The happier reign the ſooner it begins:
Reign then; what canſt thou better do the while?
To whom our Saviour anſwer thus return'd.
All things are beſt fulfill'd in their due time,
And time there is for all things, Truth hath ſaid:
If of my reign prophetic Writ hath told,
That it ſhall never end, ſo when begin
The Father in his Purpoſe hath decreed,
He in whoſe hand all times and ſeaſons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I ſhall firſt
Be try'd in humble ſtate, and things adverſe,
By tribulations, injuries, inſults,
Contempts, and ſcorns, and ſnares, and violence,
Suffering, abſtaining, quietly expecting,
Without diſtruſt or doubt, that he may know
What I can ſuffer, how obey? Who beſt
Can ſuffer, beſt can do; beſt reign, who firſt
Well hath obey'd; juſt trial ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee when I begin
My everlaſting Kingdom, why art thou
Solicitous, what moves thy inquiſition?
Know'ſt thou not that my riſing is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy deſtruction?
To whom the Tempter inly rack'd reply'd:
Let that come when it comes; all hope is loſt

Of

Of my reception into grace; what worſe?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear;
If there be worſe, the expectation more
Of worſe torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worſt; worſt is my Port,
My harbour and my ultimate repoſe,
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime: whatever, for it ſelf condemn'd,
And will alike be puniſh'd; whether thou
Reign or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aſpect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil ſtate,
Would ſtand between me and thy Father's ire,
(Whoſe ire I dread more than the Fire of Hell)
A ſhelter, and a kind of ſhading cool
Interpoſition, as a ſummer's cloud.
If I then to the worſt that can be haſte,
Why move thy feet ſo ſlow to what is beſt,
Happieſt both to thyſelf and all the world,
That thou who worthieſt art ſhould'ſt be their King?
Perhaps thou linger'ſt, in deep thoughts detain'd
Of th' enterprize ſo hazardous and high:
No wonder; for though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, conſider,
Thy life hath yet been private, moſt part ſpent
At home, ſcarce view'd the *Galilean* Towns,
And once a-year *Jeruſalem*, few days
Short ſojourn; and what thence could'ſt thou obſerve?

The

The world thou haſt not ſeen, much leſs her glory,
Empires, and Monarchs, and their radiant Courts,
Beſt ſchool of beſt experience, quickeſt Inſight
In all things that to greateſt Actions lead.
The wiſeſt, unexperienc'd, will be ever
Tim'rous and loth, with novice modeſty,
(As he who ſeeking Aſſes found a Kingdom)
Irreſolute, unhardy, unadventrous:
But I will bring thee where thou ſoon ſhalt quit
Thoſe rudiments, and ſee before thine eyes
The Monarchies of th'Earth, their pomp and ſtate,
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyſelf ſo apt, in regal Arts,
And regal Myſteries, that thou may'ſt know
How beſt their oppoſition to withſtand.
With that (ſuch pow'r was giv'n him then) he took
The Son of God up to a Mountain high.
It was a Mountain, at whoſe verdant feet
A ſpacious plain, out-ſtretch'd in circuit wide,
Lay pleaſant; from his ſide two rivers flow'd,
Th' one winding, th' other ſtraight, and left between
Fair Champain with leſs rivers intervein'd,
Then meeting join'd their Tribute to the Sea;
Fertil of corn the glebe, of oil and wine,
With herds the paſtures throng'd, with flocks the hills;
Huge Cities and high tower'd, that well might ſeem
The ſeats of mightieſt Monarchs, and ſo large
The Proſpect was, that here and there was room
For barren deſart fountainleſs and dry.
To this high mountain's top the Tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new traine of words began.

Well

Well have we ſpeeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Foreſt and field, and flood, temples and tow'rs
Cut ſhorter many a league; here thou behold'ſt
Aſſyria and her Empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the *Caſpian* lake, thence on
As far as *Indus* Eaſt, *Euphrates* Weſt,
And oft beyond; to South the *Perſian* Bay,
And inacceſſible th'*Arabian* drought:
Here *Nineveh*, of length within her wall
Sev'ral days journey, built by *Ninus* old,
Of that firſt golden Monarchy the ſeat,
And ſeat of *Salmanaſſar*, whoſe ſucceſs
Iſrael in long captivity ſtill mourns;
There *Babylon* the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy Father *David*'s houſe
Led captive, and *Jeruſalem* laid waſte,
Till *Cyrus* ſet them free; *Perſepolis*,
His City, there thou ſeeſt, and *Bactra* there;
Ecbatana her ſtructure vaſt there ſhews,
And *Hecatompylos* her hundred gates;
There *Suſa* by *Choaſpes*, amber ſtream,
The drink of none but Kings; of later fame
Built by *Emathian* or by *Parthian* hands,
The great *Seleucia*, *Nicibis*, and there
Artaxata, *Teredon*, *Ctefiphon*,
Turning with eaſy eye thou mayſt behold.
All theſe the *Parthian*, now ſome Ages paſt,
By great *Arſaces* led, who founded firſt
That Empire, under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious Kings of *Antioch* won.

And

And juſt in time thou com'ſt to have a view
Of his great Pow'r; for now the *Parthian* King
In *Ctesiphon* hath gather'd all his Hoſt
Againſt the *Scythian*, whoſe Incurſions wild
Have waſted *Sogdiana*; to her aid
He marches now in haſte; ſee, though from far,
His thouſands, in what Martial-equipage
They iſſue forth! ſteel bows, and ſhafts their arms,
Of equal dread in flight, or in purſuit;
All Horſemen, in which fight they moſt excel:
See how in warlike Muſter they appear,
In rhombs and wedges, and half-moons and wings!
He lookt and ſaw what numbers numberleſs
The City-gates out-pour'd, light armed Troops
In coats of Mail and Military pride;
In Mail their horſes clad, yet fleet and ſtrong,
Prauncing their riders bore, the flow'r and choice
Of many Provinces from bound to bound;
From *Arachoſia*, from *Candaor* Eaſt,
And *Margiana* to th' *Hircanian* cliffs
Of *Caucaſus*, and dark *Iberian* dales,
From *Atropatia* and the neighb'ring plains
Of *Adiabene*, *Media*, and the South
Of *Suſiana*, to *Balſara*'s haven.
He ſaw them in their forms of battel rang'd,
How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them ſhot
Sharp fleet of arrowy ſhow'rs againſt the face
Of their purſuers, and o'ercame by flight.
The field, all Iron, caſt a gleaming brown,
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn,
Cuiraſſiers all in ſteel for ſtanding fight;

Chariots

Chariots or Elephants endors'd with Tow'rs
Of Archers, nor of lab'ring Pioneers,
A multitude with Spades and Axes arm'd
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or vallies fill,
Or where plain was, raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
Mules after these, Camels and Dromedaries,
And Waggons fraught with Utensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a Camp,
When *Agrican* with all his Northern pow'rs
Besieg'd *Albracca*, as Romances tell,
The City of *Gallaphrone*, from thence to win
The fairest of her Sex *Angelica*,
His daughter, sought by many prowest Knights,
Both *Paynim*, and the Peers of *Charlemaine*.
Such and so numerous was their Chivalry;
At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presum'd,
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd.

That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not ev'ry way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark
To what end I have brought thee hither, and shewn
All this fair sight: thy Kingdom though foretold
By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou
Endeavour, as thy Father *David* did,
Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means;
Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.
But say thou wert possess'd of *David*'s Throne
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or *Jew*; how could'st thou hope

Long

Long to enjoy it quiet and ſecure,
Between two ſuch enclofing enemies,
Roman, and *Parthian*? therefore one of theſe
Thou muſt make ſure thy own, the *Parthian* firſt,
By my advice, as nearer and of late
Found able by invaſion to annoy
Thy country, and captive lead away her Kings
Antigonus and old *Hyrcanus* bound,
Maugre the *Roman*: it ſhall be my taſk
To render thee the *Parthian* at diſpoſe;
Chuſe which thou wilt by conqueſt or by league.
By him thou ſhalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly reinſtal thee
In *David*'s royal Seat, his true Succeſſor,
Deliv'rance of thy brethren, thoſe ten Tribes
Whoſe offſpring in his Territory yet ſerve
In *Habor*, and among the *Medes* diſpers'd.
Ten Sons of *Jacob*, two of *Joſeph*, loſt
Thus long from *Iſrael*; ſerving, as of old
Their Fathers in the land of *Egypt* ſerv'd,
This offer ſets before thee to deliver.
Theſe if from ſervitude thou ſhalt reſtore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the Throne of *David* in full glory,
From *Egypt* to *Euphrates*, and beyond
Shalt reign, and *Rome* or *Cæſar* not need fear.

To whom our Saviour anſwer'd thus unmov'd.
Much oſtentation vain of fleſhly arm,
And fragile arms, much inſtrument of war
Long in preparing, ſoon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou'ſt ſet; and in my ear

Vented

Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battels and leagues,
Plauſible to the World, to me worth nought.
Means I muſt uſe thou ſay'ſt, prediction elſe
Will unpredict and fail me of the Throne:
My time I told thee (and that time for thee
Were better fartheſt off) is not yet come;
When that comes, think not thou to find me ſlack
On my part aught endeav'ring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumberſome
Luggage of War there ſhewn me, argument
Of human weakneſs rather than of ſtrength.
My Brethren, as thou call'ſt them, thoſe ten Tribes
I muſt deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full Scepter ſway
To juſt extent over all *Iſrael*'s Sons.
But whence to thee this zeal, where was it then
For *Iſrael*, or for *David*, or his Throne,
When thou ſtood'ſt up his Tempter to the pride
Of numb'ring *Iſrael*, which coſt the lives
Of threeſcore and ten thouſand *Iſraelites*
By three days Peſtilence? ſuch was thy zeal
To *Iſrael* then, the ſame that now to me.
As for thoſe captive Tribes, themſelves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worſhip Calves, the Deities
Of *Egypt*, *Baal* next and *Aſhtaroth*;
And all th'Idolatries of Heathen round,
Beſides their other worſe than heath'niſh crimes;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themſelves, or penitent beſought

The

The God of their Fore-fathers; but ſo dy'd
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themſelves, diſtinguiſhable ſcarce
From Gentiles, but by Circumciſion vain,
And God with Idols in their Worſhip join'd.
Should I of theſe the liberty regard,
Who freed, as to their ancient Patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
Headlong wou'd follow; and to their Gods perhaps
Of *Bethel* and of *Dan*? no, let them ſerve
Their enemies, who ſerve Idols with God.
Yet he at length, time to himſelf beſt known,
Remembring *Abraham*, by ſome wondrous call
May bring them back repentant and ſincere,
And at their paſſing cleave th' *Aſſyrian* flood,
While to their native land with joy they haſte;
As the Red Sea and *Jordan* once he cleft,
When to the promis'd land their Fathers paſs'd;
To his due time and providence I leave them.
So ſpake *Iſrael*'s true King; and to the Fiend
Made anſwer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it when with truth falſhood contends.

The End of the Third Book.

PARADISE REGAIN'D.

BOOK IV.

Perplex'd and troubled at his bad ſucceſs
The Tempter ſtood, nor had what to reply,
Diſcover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the perſuaſive Rhetorie
That ſleek'd his tongue, and won ſo much on *Eve*,
So little here, nay loſt; but *Eve* was *Eve*,
This far his over-match, who ſelf-deceiv'd
And raſh, before-hand had no better weigh'd
The ſtrength he was to cope with or his own:
But as a man who had been matchleſs held
In cunning, over-reach'd where leaſt he thought,
To ſalve his credit, and for very ſpight
Still will be tempting him who foils him ſtill,
And never ceaſe, though to his ſhame the more;
Or as a ſwarm of flies in vintage-time,
About the wine-preſs where ſweet muſt is pour'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming ſound;

Or

Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dash'd, th' assault renew,
Vain batt'ry, and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er though desp'rate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
Wash'd by the Southern Sea, and on the North
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills,
That screen'd the fruits of th'earth and seats of men
From cold *Septentrion* blasts, thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks,
On each side an Imperial City stood,
With Tow'rs and Temples proudly elevate
On seven small Hills, with Palaces adorn'd,
Porches and Theatres, Baths, Aqueducts,
Statues and Trophies, and Triumphal Arcs,
Gardens and Groves presented to his eyes,
Above the height of Mountains interpos'd.
By what strange Parallax or Optic skill
Of Vision multiply'd through air, or Glass
Of Telescope, were curious to enquire:
And now the Tempter thus his silence broke.
The City which thou seest no other deem
Than great and glorious *Rome*, Queen of the Earth
So far renown'd, and with the spoils enricht
Of Nations: there the Capitol thou seest
Above the rest lifting his stately head

On the *Tarpeian* Rock, her Citadel
Impregnable; and there Mount *Palatine*
Th' Imperial Palace, compass huge and high
The Structure, skill of noblest Architects,
With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,
Turrets and Terrasses, and glitt'ring Spires.
Many a fair Edifice besides, more like
Houses of Gods (so well I have dispos'd
My airy Microscope) thou may'st behold
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd Artificers
In Cedar, Marble, Ivory or Gold.
Thence to the Gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or entring in,
Pretors, Proconsuls to their Provinces
Hasting or on return, in robes of State;
Lictors and rods the ensigns of their pow'r,
Legions and Cohorts, turmes of horse, and wings:
Or Embassies from Regions far remote
In various habits on the *Appian* road,
Or on th' *Emilian*; some from farthest South,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
Meroe Nilotic Isle, and more to West,
The Realm of *Bocchus* to the Black-moor Sea;
From th' *Asian* Kings and *Parthian* among these,
From *India* and the golden *Chersonese*,
And utmost *Indian* Isle *Taprobane*,
Dusk faces with white silken Turbants wreath'd;
From *Gallia*, *Gades*, and the *British* West,
Germans and *Scythians*, and *Sarmatians* North
Beyond *Danubius* to the *Tauric* Pool.

All

All Nations now to *Rome* obedience pay,
To *Rome*'s great Emperor, whoſe wide domain
In ample Territory, Wealth and Pow'r,
Civility of Manners, Arts and Arms,
And long Renown, thou juſtly may'ſt prefer
Before the *Parthian*; theſe two Thrones except,
The reſt are barb'rous, and ſcarce worth the ſight,
Shar'd among petty Kings too far remov'd:
Theſe having ſhewn thee, I have ſhewn thee all
The Kingdoms of the World, and all their glory.
This Emp'ror hath no Son, and now is old,
Old and laſcivious, and from *Rome* retir'd
To *Capreæ*, an Iſland ſmall but ſtrong
On the *Campanian* ſhore, with purpoſe there
His horrid luſts in private to enjoy,
Committing to a wicked Favourite
All public cares, and yet of him ſuſpicious,
Hated of all, and hating: With what eaſe,
Indu'd with Regal Virtues as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
Might'ſt thou expel this Monſter from his Throne,
Now made a ſtye, and in his place aſcending,
A victor, people free from ſervile yoke?
And with my help thou may'ſt; to me the pow'r
Is giv'n, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no leſs than all the world,
Aim at the higheſt; without the higheſt attain'd
Will be for thee no ſitting, or not long
On *David*'s Throne, be propheſy'd what will.

To whom the Son of God unmov'd reply'd,
Nor doth this grandeur and majeſtick ſhow

Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
More than of Arms before, allure mine eye,
Much leſs my mind; though thou ſhould'ſt add to tell
Their ſumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feaſts
On *Citron* tables or *Atlantic* ſtone,
(For I have alſo heard, perhaps have read)
Their wines of *Setia*, *Cales*, and *Falerne*,
Chios and *Crete*, and how they quaff in Gold,
Cryſtal and Myrrhine cups imboſs'd with Gems
And ſtuds of Pearl, to me ſhou'dſt tell, who thirſt
And hunger ſtill: then Embaſſies thou ſhew'ſt
From Nations far and nigh; what honour that,
But tedious waſte of time to ſit and hear
So many hollow compliments and lies,
Outlandiſh flatteries? then proceed'ſt to talk
Of th'Emperor, how eaſily ſubdu'd,
How gloriouſly; I ſhall, thou ſay'ſt, expel
A brutiſh monſter: what if I withal
Expel a Devil who firſt made him ſuch?
Let his tormenter Conſcience find him out;
For him I was not ſent, nor yet to free
That People, victor once, now vile and baſe,
Deſervedly made vaſſal; who once juſt,
Frugal, and mild, and temp'rate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the Nations under yoke,
Peeling their Provinces, exhauſted all
By luſt and rapine; firſt ambitious grown
Of triumph, that inſulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their ſports to blood enur'd
Of fighting beaſts, and men to beaſts expos'd,
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier ſtill,

And

And from the daily Scene effeminate.
What wiſe and valiant Man would ſeek to free
Theſe thus degen'rate, by themſelves enſlav'd,
Or could of inward ſlaves make outward free?
Know therefore, when my ſeaſon comes to ſit
On *David*'s Throne, it ſhall be like a Tree,
Spreading and overſhad'wing all the Earth,
Or as a Stone that ſhall to pieces daſh
All Monarchies beſides throughout the World;
And of my Kingdom there ſhall be no end:
Means there ſhall be to this, but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.

To whom the Tempter impudent reply'd:
I ſee all offers made by me how ſlight
Thou valu'ſt, becauſe offer'd, and reject'ſt:
Nothing will pleaſe the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than ſtill to contradict.
On th'other ſide, know alſo thou, that I
On what I offer ſet as high eſteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for nought;
All theſe which in a moment thou behold'ſt,
The Kingdoms of the World to thee I give;
(For giv'n to me, I give to whom I pleaſe,
No trifle;) yet with this reſerve, not elſe
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worſhip me as thy ſuperior Lord,
Eaſily done, and hold them all of me:
For what can leſs ſo great a gift deſerve?

Whom thus our Saviour anſwer'd with diſdain.
I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers leſs,
Now both abhor, ſince thou haſt dar'd to utter

Th' abominable terms, impious condition;
But I endure the time, till which expir'd,
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,
The first of all Commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accurst, now more accurst
For this attempt, bolder than that on *Eve*,
And more blasphemous? which expect to rue.
The Kingdoms of the World to thee were giv'n,
Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd;
Other donation none thou canst produce:
If giv'n, by whom but by the King of Kings,
God over all Supreme? if giv'n to thee,
By thee how fairly is the Giver now
Repaid? But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me the Son of God,
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God?
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
That evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.

To whom the Fiend, with fear abasht, reply'd:
Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
(Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men)
If I to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
What both from Men and Angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth
Nations besides from all the quarter'd winds,
God of this world invok'd and world beneath;

Who

Who then thou art whose coming is foretold
To me so fatal, me it most concerns.
The trial hath endamag'd thee no way,
Rather more honour left and more esteem;
Me nought advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
The Kingdoms of this world; I shall no more
Advise thee, gain them as thou canst, or not.
And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclin'd
Than to a worldly Crown, addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute;
As by that early action may be judg'd,
When slipping from thy Mother's eye thou went'st
Alone into the Temple; there was found
Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant
On points and questions fitting *Moses'* Chair,
Teaching not taught; the childhood shews the man,
As morning shews the day. Be famous then
By wisdom; as thy Empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend:
All knowledge is not couch'd in *Moses'* Law,
The *Pentateuch*, or what the Prophets wrote;
The *Gentiles* also know, and write, and teach
To admiration, led by Nature's light;
And with the *Gentiles* much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st;
Without their learning how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee hold conversation meet?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Their Idolisms, Traditions, Paradoxes?

Error by his own arms is best evinc'd.
Look once more ere we leave this specular Mount
Westward, much nearer by South-west, behold
Where on th' *Ægean* shore a City stands
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil,
Athens the eye of *Greece*, Mother of Arts
And Eloquence, native to famous wits,
Or hospitable; in her sweet recess,
City or Suburb, studious walks and shades:
See there the Olive Grove of *Academe*,
Plato's retirement, where the *Attic* Bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long:
There flow'ry hill *Hymettus*, with the sound
Of Bees industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there *Ilissus* rolls
His whisp'ring stream. Within the walls then view
The Schools of ancient Sages; his, who bred
Great *Alexander* to subdue the World,
Lyceum there, and painted *Stoa* next:
There thou shalt hear and learn the secret pow'r
Of harmony in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand, and various-measur'd verse,
Æolian Charms and *Dorian Lyric* Odes;
And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
Blind *Melesigenes*, thence *Homer* call'd,
Whose Poem *Phœbus* challeng'd for his own.
Thence what the lofty grave Tragedians taught
In *Chorus* or *Iambic*, teachers best
Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd,
In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate and chance, and change in human life;

High

High actions, and high passions best describing.
Thence to the famous Orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce Democratie,
Shook the Arsenal, and fulmin'd over *Greece*
To *Macedon*, and *Artaxerxes'* Throne.
To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
From Heav'n descended to the low-roof't house
Of *Socrates*; see there his Tenement,
Whom well inspir'd the Oracle pronounc'd
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issu'd forth
Mellifluous streams, that water'd all the Schools
Of *Academics* old and new; with those
Surnam'd *Peripatetics*, and the Sect
Epicurean, and the *Stoic* severe.
These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
Till time mature thee to a Kingdom's weight;
These rules will render thee a King compleat
Within thyself, much more with Empire join'd.
To whom our Saviour sagely thus reply'd
Think not, but that I know these things, or think
I know them not; not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I ought: he who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other Doctrine needs, though granted true;
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all profess'd
To know this only, that he nothing know;
The next to fabling fell, and smooth conceits;
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;

Others

Others in virtue plac'd felicity,
But virtue joyn'd with riches and long life;
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease:
The Stoic last in Philosophic pride,
By him call'd virtue, and his virtuous man,
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life;
Which when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can:
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas what can they teach, and not mislead;
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the Soul they talk, but all awry;
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none;
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not; or by delusion
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets
An empty cloud. However many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisom; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
(And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep vers'd in books and shallow in himself,

Crude

Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a ſponge;
As Children gath'ring pebbles on the ſhore.
Or if I would delight my private hours
With Muſic or with Poem, where ſo ſoon
As in our native Language can I find
That ſolace? All our Law and Story ſtrew'd
With Hymns, our Pſalms with artful terms inſcrib'd,
Our Hebrew Songs and Harps, in *Babylon*,
That pleas'd ſo well our Victors ear, declare
That rather *Greece* from us theſe arts deriv'd;
Ill imitated, while they loudeſt ſing
The vices of their Deities, and their own
In Fable, Hymn, or Song, ſo perſonating
Their Gods ridiculous, and themſelves paſt ſhame.
Remove their ſwelling Epithets, thick laid
As varniſh on a Harlot's cheek; the reſt,
Thin ſown with aught of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With *Sion*'s ſongs, to all true taſtes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and God-like men,
The Holieſt of Holies, and his Saints:
Such are from God inſpir'd, not ſuch from thee;
Unleſs where moral virtue is expreſs'd
By light of Nature, not in all quite loſt.
Their Orators thou then extoll'ſt, as thoſe
The top of Eloquence; Statiſts indeed,
And lovers of their Country, as may ſeem;
But herein to our prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The ſolid rules of civil Government,

In

In their Majestic unaffected style,
Than all the Oratory of *Greece* and *Rome*.
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt
What makes a Nation happy, and keeps it so;
What ruins Kingdoms, and lays Cities flat:
These only with our Law best form a King.
So spake the Son of God; but Satan now
Quite at a loss (for all his darts were spent)
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow reply'd:
Since neither wealth, nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor Empire pleases thee, nor aught
By me propos'd in life contemplative,
Or active, tended on by glory, or fame,
What dost thou in this World? the Wilderness
For thee is fittest place; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee: yet remember
What I foretel thee, soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected thus
Nicely or cautiously my offer'd aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On *David*'s Throne, or Throne of all the world;
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season
When Prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
Now contrary, if I read aught in Heav'n,
Or Heav'n write aught of Fate, by what the Stars
Voluminous, or single Characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to spell,
Sorrows and labours, opposition, hate,
Attends thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death:
A Kingdom they portend thee, but what Kingdom,

Real

Real or Allegoric, I discern not,
Nor when; eternal sure, as without end,
Without beginning; for no date prefixt
Directs me in the Starry Rubric set.

So saying, he took, (for still he knew his Pow'r
Not yet expir'd) and to the Wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
As day-light sunk, and brought in lowring night,
Her shad'wy offspring, unsubstantial both,
Privation meer of light and absent day.
Our Saviour meek and with untroubled mind,
After his airy jaunt, though hurry'd sore,
Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
Wherever under some concourse of shades,
Whose branching arms thick intertwin'd might shield
From dews and damps of night his sheltter'd head;
But sheltter'd slept in vain; for at his head
The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturb'd his sleep: and either Tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heav'n. The clouds
From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
Fierce rain with lightning mixt, water with fire
In ruin reconcil'd: nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vext Wilderness, whose tallest Pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest Oaks
Bow'd their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts
Or torn up sheer: ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stoodst

Un-

Unſhaken: nor yet ſtaid the terror there;
Infernal Ghoſts, and Helliſh Furies, round
Environ'd thee, ſome howl'd, ſome yell'd, ſome ſhriek'd,
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Sat'ſt unappal'd in calm and ſinleſs Peace.
Thus paſs'd the night ſo foul, till morning fair
Came forth with Pilgrim ſteps in amice gray;
Who with her radiant finger ſtill'd the roar
Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
And griſly Spectres, which the Fiend had rais'd,
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the Sun with more effectual beams
Had chear'd the face of Earth, and dry'd the wet
From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,
Who all things now beheld more freſh and green,
After a night of ſtorm ſo ruinous,
Clear'd up their choiceſt notes in buſh and ſpray
To gratulate the ſweet return of morn.
Nor yet amidſt this joy and brighteſt morn
Was abſent, after all his miſchief done,
The Prince of darkneſs; glad would alſo ſeem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;
Yet with no new device, they all were ſpent,
Rather by this his laſt affront reſolv'd,
Deſp'rate of better courſe, to vent his rage,
And mad deſpight to be ſo oft repell'd.
Him walking on a Sunny hill he found,
Back'd on the North and Weſt by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he ſtarts in wonted ſhape,
And in a careleſs mood thus to him ſaid.

Fair

Fair morning yet betides thee Son of God,
After a dismal night; I hear'd the rack
As Earth and Sky would mingle; but myself
Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them,
As dang'rous to the pillar'd frame of Heav'n,
Or to the Earth's dark basis underneath,
Are to the main as inconsiderable,
And harmless, if not wholesom, as a sneeze
To man's less universe, and soon are gone:
Yet as being oft-times noxious where they light
On man, beast, plant, wastful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
They oft fore-signify, and threaten ill.
This Tempest at this Desart most was bent;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
The perfect season offer'd with my aid
To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
All to the push of Fate? pursue thy way
Of gaining *David*'s Throne no man knows when,
(For both the when and how is no where told)
Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
For Angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
The time and means: each act is rightliest done,
Not when it must, but when it may be best.
If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
Ere thou of *Israel*'s Scepter get fast hold;

Whereof

Whereof this ominous night that clos'd thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies
May warn thee as a sure fore-going sign.
So talk'd he; while the Son of God went on
And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus.
Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
Those terrors which thou speak'st of, did me none;
I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
And threatning nigh: what they can do as signs
Betok'ning, or ill boding, I contemn
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
Who knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I accepting
At least might seem to hold all pow'r of thee,
Ambitious spirit, and wou'dst be thought my God,
And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrify
Me to thy will; desist (thou art discern'd
And toil'st in vain) nor me in vain molest.
To whom the Fiend now swoln with rage reply'd:
Then hear, O Son of *David*, Virgin-born,
(For Son of God to me is yet in doubt)
Of the Messiah I have heard foretold
By all the Prophets; of thy birth at length
Announc'd by *Gabriel* with the first I knew,
And of th' Angelic Song in *Bethlehem* field,
On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born:
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
Till at the Ford of *Jordan*, whither all
Flock'd

Flock'd to the Baptiſt, I among the reſt,
(Though not to be baptiz'd,) by voice from Heav'n
Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower ſcrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bears no ſingle ſenſe:
The Son of God I alſo am, or was,
And if I was, I am; relation ſtands;
All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought
In ſome reſpect far higher ſo declar'd.
Therefore I watch'd thy footſteps from that hour,
And follow'd thee ſtill on to this waſte wild;
Where by all beſt conjectures I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy.
Good reaſon then, if I before-hand ſeek
To underſtand my Adverſary, who
And what he is; his wiſdom, pow'r, intent;
By parl, or compoſition, truce or league
To win him, or win from him what I can.
An opportunity I here have had
To try thee, ſift thee; and confeſs have found thee
Proof againſt all temptation as a rock
Of Adamant, and as a Center, firm,
To th' utmoſt of mere man both wiſe and good,
Not more; for Honours, Riches, Kingdoms, Glory
Have been before contemn'd, and may again.
Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heav'n,
Another method I muſt now begin.

So ſaying, he caught him up, and without wing

Of

Of *Hippogrif*, bore through the Air ſublime
Over the Wilderneſs and o'er the Plain;
Till underneath them fair *Jeruſalem*,
The holy City, lifted high her Towr's,
And higher yet the glorious Temple rear'd
Her pile, far off appearing like a Mount
Of Alabaſter, topt with Golden Spires:
There on the higheſt Pinnacle he ſet
The Son of God; and added thus in ſcorn.
There ſtand, if thou wilt ſtand; to ſtand upright
Will aſk thee ſkill; I to thy Father's houſe
Have brought thee, and higheſt plac'd; higheſt is beſt.
Now ſhew thy Progeny; if not to ſtand,
Caſt thyſelf down; ſafely, if Son of God:
For it is written, He will give command
Concerning thee to his Angels, in their hands
They ſhall uplift thee, leſt at any time
Thou chance to daſh thy foot againſt a ſtone.
To whom thus Jeſus: Alſo it is written,
Tempt not the Lord thy God: he ſaid and ſtood.
But Satan ſmitten with amazement fell.
As when Earth's Son *Antæus* (to compare
Small things with greateſt) in *Iraſſa* ſtrove
With *Jove*'s *Alcides*, and oft foil'd ſtill roſe,
Receiving from his mother Earth new ſtrength,
Freſh from his fall and fiercer grapple join'd,
Throttled at length in th' Air expir'd and fell:
So after many a foil the Tempter proud,
Renewing freſh aſſaults, amidſt his pride
Fell whence he ſtood to ſee his Victor fall.

And

And as that *Theban* monſter that propos'd
Her riddle, and him, who ſolv'd it not, devour'd;
That once found out and ſolv'd, for grief and ſpight
Caſt herſelf headlong from th' *Iſmenian* ſteep;
So ſtrook with dread and anguiſh fell the Fiend,
And to his crew that ſat conſulting, brought
Joyleſs Triumphals of his hop'd ſucceſs,
Ruin, and deſperation, and diſmay,
Who durſt ſo proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell; and ſtraight a fiery Globe
Of Angels on full ſail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plumy Vans receiv'd him ſoft
From his uneaſy ſtation, and upbore
As on a floating couch through the blithe Air;
Then in a flow'ry valley ſet him down
On a green bank, and ſet before him ſpred
A Table of Celeſtial Food, Divine,
Ambroſial fruits, fetcht from the Tree of Life,
And from the Fount of Life Ambroſial drink,
That ſoon refreſh'd him weary'd, and repair'd
What hunger, if aught hunger had impair'd,
Or thirſt; and as he fed, Angelic Choirs
Sung Heav'nly Anthems of his Victory
Over temptation, and the Tempter proud.
True Image of the Father, whether thron'd
In the boſom of bliſs, and light of light
Conceiving, or remote from Heav'n, enſhrin'd
In fleſhly Tabernacle, and human form,
Wand'ring the Wilderneſs, whatever place,
Habit or ſtate, or motion, ſtill expreſſing
The Son of God, with God-like force indu'd

Againſt

Againſt th' Attempter of thy Father's Throne,
And Thief of Paradiſe; him long of old
Thou didſt debel, and down from Heaven caſt
With all his Army; now thou haſt aveng'd
Supplanted *Adam*, and by vanquiſhing
Temptation, haſt regain'd loſt Paradiſe;
And fruſtrated the conqueſt fraudulent:
He never more henceforth will dare ſet foot
In paradiſe to tempt; his ſnares are broke.
For though that ſeat of earthly bliſs be fail'd,
A fairer Paradiſe is founded now
For *Adam* and his choſen Sons, whom thou
A Saviour art come down to re-inſtal,
Where they ſhall dwell ſecure, when time ſhall be,
Of Tempter and Temptation without fear.
But thou, Infernal Serpent, ſhalt not long
Rule in the Clouds; like an Autumnal Star,
Or Lightning, thou ſhalt fall from Heav'n, trod down
Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'ſt
Thy wound, yet not thy laſt and deadlieſt wound,
By this repulſe receiv'd, and hold'ſt in Hell
No triumph: in all her Gates *Abaddon* rues
Thy bold Attempt; hereafter learn with aw
To dread the Son of God: he all unarm'd
Shall chaſe thee with the terror of his voice
From thy Demoniac holds, poſſeſſion foul,
Thee and thy Legions; yelling they ſhall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of Swine,
Left he command them down into the deep,
Bound, and to torment ſent before their time.

Hail

Hail Son of the moſt High, heir of both Worlds,
Queller of Satan, on thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to ſave mankind.
Thus they the Son of God our Saviour meek
Sung Victor, and from Heav'nly Feaſt refreſht
Brought on his way with joy; he unobſerv'd
Home to his Mother's houſe private return'd.

THE END.

SAMSON AGONISTES;

A

Dramatic POEM.

The AUTHOR

JOHN MILTON.

Ariſtot. Poet. Cap. 6.

Τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας, &c.

Tragœdia eſt imitatio actionis ſeriæ, *&c.* per miſericordiam & metum perficiens talium affectuum luſtrationem.

Of that ſort of Dramatic Poem which is call'd Tragedy.

TRAGEDY, as it was anciently compos'd, hath been ever held the graveſt, moralleſt, and moſt profitable of all other Poems: therefore ſaid by *Ariſtotle* to be of power, by raiſing pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of thoſe and ſuch like Paſſions, that is, to temper, and reduce them to juſt meaſure with a kind of delight, ſtirr'd up by reading or ſeeing thoſe Paſſions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his aſſertion; for ſo in Phyſic things of melancholic hue and quality are us'd againſt Melancholy, ſour againſt ſour, ſalt to remove ſalt Humours. Hence Philoſophers, and other graveſt Writers, as *Cicero*, *Plutarch*, and others, frequently cite out of Tragic Poets, both to adorn and illuſtrate their diſcourſe. The Apoſtle *Paul* himſelf thought it not unworthy to inſert a verſe of *Euripides* into the Text of Holy Scripture, 1 *Cor.* xv. 33. and *Paræus* commenting on the *Revelation*, divides the whole Book as a Tragedy, into Acts, diſtinguiſh'd each by a Chorus of Heavenly Harp-

ings, and Song between. Heretofore Men in higheſt dignity have laboured not a little to be thought able to compoſe a Tragedy. Of that honour *Dionyſius* the elder was no leſs ambitious, than before of his attaining to the Tyranny. *Auguſtus Cæſar* alſo had begun his *Ajax*, but unable to pleaſe his own Judgment with what he had begun, left it unfiniſh'd. *Seneca* the Philoſopher is by ſome thought the Author of thoſe Tragedies (at leaſt the beſt of them) that go under that name. *Gregory Nazianzen*, a Father of the Church, thought it not unbeſeeming the ſanctity of his perſon to write a Tragedy, which is intitl'd, *Chriſt ſuffering*. This is mention'd to vindicate Tragedy from the ſmall eſteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day with other common Interludes; hap'ning through the Poet's error of intermixing Comic ſtuff with Tragic ſadneſs and gravity; or introducing trivial and vulgar Perſons, which by all judicious hath been counted abſurd; and brought in without diſcretion, corruptly to gratify the people. And though ancient Tragedy uſe no Prologue, yet uſing ſometimes, in caſe of ſelf-defence, or explanation, that which *Martial* calls an Epiſtle; in behalf of this Tragedy coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us paſſes for beſt, thus much before-hand may be Epiſtl'd; That *Chorus* is here introduc'd after the *Greek* manner,

ner, not ancient only but modern, and ſtill in uſe among the *Italians*. In the modelling therefore of this Poem, with good reaſon, the Ancients and *Italians* are rather follow'd, as of much more Authority and Fame. The meaſure of Verſe us'd in the Chorus is of all ſorts, call'd by the *Greeks Monoſtrophic*, or rather *Apolelymenon*, without regard had to *Strophe*, *Antiſtrophe*, or *Epod*, which were a kind of Stanzas fram'd only for the Muſic, then us'd with the Chorus that ſung; not eſſential to the Poem, and therefore not material; or being divided into Stanzas or Pauſes, they may be call'd *Allæoſtropha*. Diviſion into Act and Scene referring chiefly to the Stage, (to which this Work never was intended) is here omitted. It ſuffices if the whole Drama be found not produc'd beyond the fifth Act. Of the ſtyle and uniformity, and that commonly call'd the Plot, whether intricate or explicit, (which is nothing indeed but ſuch œconomy, or diſpoſition of the fable as may ſtand beſt with veriſimilitude and decorum) they only will beſt judge who are not unacquainted with *Æſchylus*, *Sophocles*, and *Euripides*, the three Tragic Poets unequall'd yet by any, and the beſt rule to all who endeavour to write Tragedy. The circumſcription of time wherein the whole Drama begins and ends, is according to ancient rule, and beſt example, within the ſpace of 24 hours.

The Argument.

SAmſon *made Captive, Blind, and now in the Priſon at* Gaza, *there to labour as in a common work-houſe; on a Feſtival day, in the general ceſſation from labour, comes forth into the open Air, to a place nigh, ſomewhat retir'd, there to ſit a while and bemoan his condition. Where he happens at length to be viſited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who ſeek to comfort him what they can; then by his old Father* Manoa, *who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpoſe to procure his liberty by ranſom; and laſtly, that this Feaſt was proclaim'd by the* Philiſtines *as a day of Thankſgiving for their deliverance from the hands of* Samſon, *which yet more troubles him.* Manoa *then departs to proſecute his endeavour with the* Philiſtian *Lords for* Samſon's *redemption; who in the mean while is viſited by other perſons; and laſtly by a public Officer to require his coming to the Feaſt before the Lords and People, to play or ſhew his ſtrength in their preſence: he*

he at firſt refuſes, diſmiſſing the public Officer with abſolute denial to come; at length perſuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the ſecond time with great threatnings to fetch him. The Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoa *returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his Son's deliverance: in the midſt of which diſcourſe an Hebrew comes in haſte, confuſedly at firſt, and afterward more diſtinctly relating to him the Cataſtrophe, what* Samſon *had done to the* Philiſtines, *and by accident to himſelf; wherewith the Tragedy ends.*

The PERSONS.

SAMSON.
MANOA, *The Father of* Samſon.
DALILA *his Wife.*
HARAPHA *of* Gath.
Publick Officer.
Meſſenger.
Chorus *of* Danites.

The Scene before the Priſon in Gaza.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

SAMSON.

A Little onward lend thy guiding hand
To theſe dark ſteps, a little farther on;
For yonder bank hath choice of Sun or ſhade:
There I am wont to ſit, when any chance
Relieves me from my taſk of ſervile toil,
Daily in the common Priſon elſe enjoin'd me;
Where I a Pris'ner chain'd, ſcarce freely draw
The Air impriſon'd alſo, cloſe and damp,
Unwholeſome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of Heav'n freſh blowing, pure and ſweet,
With day-ſpring born; here leave me to reſpire.
This day a ſolemn Feaſt the people hold
To *Dagon* their Sea-Idol, and forbid
Laborious works; unwillingly this reſt
Their Superſtition yields me: hence with leave
Retiring from the pop'lar noiſe, I ſeek
This unfrequented Place to find ſome eaſe,
Eaſe to the body ſome, none to the mind
From reſtleſs thoughts, that like a deadly ſwarm
Of hornets arm'd, no ſooner found alone,

But ruſh upon me thronging, and preſent
Times paſt, what once I was, and what am now.
O wherefore was my birth from Heav'n foretold
Twice by an Angel; who at laſt in ſight,
Of both my Parents all in flames aſcended
From off the Altar, where an Off'ring burn'd,
As in a fiery column charioting
His God-like preſence, and from ſome great act
Or benefit reveal'd to *Abraham*'s race?
Why was my breeding order'd and preſcrib'd,
As of a perſon ſeparate to God,
Deſign'd for great exploits; if I muſt die
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my Eyes put out,
Made of my Enemies the ſcorn and gaze;
To grind in brazen fetters under taſk,
With this Heav'n-gifted ſtrength? O glorious ſtrength
Put to the labour of a beaſt, debas'd
Lower than bondſlave! Promiſe was that I
Should *Iſrael* from *Philiſtian* yoke deliver;
Ask for this great deliv'rer now, and find him
Eyeleſs in *Gaza* at the Mill with ſlaves,
Himſelf in bonds under *Philiſtian* yoke.
Yet ſtay, let me not raſhly call in doubt
Divine Prediction: what if all foretold
Had been fulfill'd but thro' my own default,
Whom have I to complain of but myſelf;
Who this high gift of ſtrength committed to me,
In what part lodg'd, how eaſily bereft me,
Under the Seal of ſilence could not keep,
But weakly to a Woman muſt reveal it,
O'ercome with importunity and tears?

O impotence of mind, in body ſtrong!
But what is ſtrength without a double ſhare
Of wiſdom? vaſt unwieldy, burthenſome,
Proudly ſecure, yet liable to fall
By weakeſt ſubtleties, not made to rule,
But to ſubſerve where wiſdom bears command.
God, when he gave me ſtrength, to ſhew withal
How ſlight the gift was, hung it in my Hair.
But Peace, I muſt not quarrel with the will
Of higheſt diſpenſation, which herein
Haply had ends above my reach to know:
Suffices that to me ſtrength is my bane,
And proves the ſource of all my miſeries;
So many, and ſo huge, that each apart
Would aſk a life to wail; but chief of all,
O loſs of ſight, of thee I moſt complain!
Blind among Enemies! O worſe than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit Age!
Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferior to the vileſt now become
Of man or worm; the vileſt here excel me:
They creep, yet ſee; I dark in light expos'd
To daily fraud, contempt, abuſe and wrong,
Within doors, or without, ſtill as a fool,
In pow'r of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I ſeem to live, dead more than half.
O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecov'rably dark, total Eclipſe
Without all hope of day!

O first created Beam, and thou great Word,
Let there be light, and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The Sun to me is dark,
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since Light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the Soul,
She all in ev'ry part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th'eye confin'd,
So obvious and so easie to be quench'd;
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,
That she might look at will through ev'ry pore?
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light;
As in the land of darkness yet in light;
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And bury'd; but O yet more miserable!
Myself, my Sepulchre, a moving Grave!
Bury'd, yet not exempt
By privilege of death and burial
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs,
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of Life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet steering this way;
Perhaps my enemies who come to stare
At my affliction, and perhaps t'insult;

Their

Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Chor. This, this is he; ſoftly a while,
Let us not break in upon him.
O change beyond report, thought or belief!
See how he lies at random, carelesly diffus'd,
With languiſh'd head unpropt,
As one paſt hope, abandon'd,
And by himſelf given over;
In ſlaviſh habit, ill-fitted weeds
O'er-worn and ſoil'd:
Or do my eyes miſrepreſent? Can this be he,
That Heroic, that Renown'd,
Irreſiſtible *Samſon*; whom unarm'd [ſtand;
No ſtrength of man, or fierceſt wild beaſt could with-
Who tore the Lion, as the Lion tears the Kid,
Ran on imbattled Armies clad in Iron,
And weaponleſs himſelf,
Made Arms ridiculous, uſeleſs the forgery
Of brazen Shield and Spear, the hammer'd Cuiraſs,
Chalybean temper'd ſteel, and frock of mail
Adamantean Proof?
But ſafeſt he who ſtood aloof,
When inſupportably his foot advanc'd,
In ſcorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurn'd them to death by Troops. The bold *Aſcalonite*
Fled from his Lion ramp, old warriors turn'd
Their plated backs under his heel;
Or grov'ling ſoil'd their creſted helmets in the duſt.
Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
The Jaw of a dead Aſs, his ſword of bone,
A thouſand foreſkins fell, the flow'r of *Paleſtin*,

In

In *Ramath-lechi*, famous to this day:
Then by main force pull'd up, and on his ſhoulders
The Gates of *Azza*, Poſt, and maſſie Bar, [bore
Up to the Hill by *Hebron*, ſeat of Giants old,
No journey of a Sabbath-day, and loaded ſo;
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up heav'n.
Which ſhall I firſt bewail,
Thy Bondage or loſt Sight,
Priſon within Priſon
Inſeparably dark?
Thou art become (O worſt imprisonment!)
The Dungeon of thyſelf; thy Soul [plain)
(Which Men enjoying ſight oft without cauſe com-
Impriſon'd now indeed,
In real darkneſs of the body dwells,
Shut up from outward light
T' incorporate with gloomy night;
For inward light, alas!
Puts forth no viſual beam.
O mirror of our fickle ſtate,
Since man on earth unparallel'd!
The rarer thy example ſtands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongeſt of mortal men,
To loweſt pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
For him I reckon not in high eſtate,
Whom long deſcent of birth,
Or the ſphere of fortune raiſes;
But thee, whoſe ſtrength, while Virtue was her mate,
Might have ſubdu'd the Earth,
Univerſally crown'd with higheſt praiſes.

Samſ. I hear the ſound of words; their ſenſe the air
Diſſolves unjointed, ere it reach my ear. [might,
Chor. He ſpeaks: let us draw nigh. Matchleſs in
The glory late of *Iſrael*, now the grief,
We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown,
From *Eſhtaol* and *Zora*'s fruitful Vale.
To viſit or bewail thee; or, if better
Counſel or conſolation we may bring,
Salve to thy Sores: apt words have pow'r to ſwage
The tumors of a troubled mind,
And are as balm to feſter'd wounds. [learn
Samſ. Your coming, Friends, revives me; for I
Now of my own experience, not by talk,
How counterfeit a coin they are, who friends
Bear in their Superſcription; (of the moſt
I wou'd be underſtood;) in proſp'rous days
They ſwarm, but in adverſe withdraw their head,
Not to be found, though ſought. Ye ſee, O friends,
How many evils have inclos'd me round;
Yet that which was the worſt now leaſt afflicts me,
Blindneſs; for had I ſight, confus'd with ſhame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who like a fooliſh Pilot have ſhipwreck'd
My Veſſel, truſted to me from above,
Glorioufly rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,
Fool! have divulg'd the ſecret gift of God
To a deceitful Woman? tell me, Friends,
Am I not ſung and proverb'd for a Fool
In ev'ry ſtreet? do they not ſay, how well
Are come upon him his deſerts? yet why?
Immeaſurable ſtrength they might behold

In

In me, of wiſdom nothing more than mean:
This with the other ſhould, at leaſt, have pair'd;
Theſe two, proportion'd ill, drove me tranſverſe.
Chor. Tax not divine diſpoſal: wiſeſt men
Have err'd, and by bad Women been deceiv'd;
And ſhall again, pretend they ne'er ſo wiſe.
Deject not then ſo overmuch thyſelf,
Who haſt of ſorrow thy full load beſides.
Yet truth to ſay, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou ſhouldſt wed *Philiſtian* Women rather
Than of thine own Tribe fairer, or as fair;
At leaſt of thy own Nation, and as noble.
Samſ. The firſt I ſaw at *Timna*, and ſhe pleas'd
Me, not my Parents, that I ſought to wed
The daughter of an Infidel: they knew not
That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
From intimate impulſe, and therefore urg'd
The marriage on; that by occaſion hence
I might begin *Iſrael*'s Deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely call'd.
She proving falſe, the next I took to Wife
(O that I never had! fond wiſh too late!)
Was in the Vale of *Sorec*, *Dalila*,
That ſpecious Monſter, my accompliſht ſnare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the ſame end; ſtill watching to oppreſs
Iſrael's Oppreſſors: of what now I ſuffer
She was not the prime cauſe, but I myſelf,
Who, vanquiſh'd with a peal of words, (O weakneſs!)
Gave up my fort of ſilence to a Woman.
Chor. In ſeeking juſt occaſion to provoke

The

The *Philistin*, thy Country's Enemy,
Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness:
Yet *Israel* still serves with all his Sons.
Sams. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On *Israel*'s Governors, and Heads of Tribes;
Who, seeing those great acts which God had done
Singly by me against their Conquerors,
Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd
Deliv'rance offer'd: I on th' other side
Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds; [doer,
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the
But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
To count them things worth notice; till at length
Their Lords the *Philistins* with gather'd pow'rs
Enter'd *Judea* seeking me, who then
Safe to the rock of *Etham* was retir'd,
Not flying, but fore-casting in what place
To set upon them what advantag'd best.
Mean while the men of *Judah*, to prevent
The harrass of their Land, beset me round;
I willingly on some conditions came
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me,
To the uncircumcis'd a welcom prey,
Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threads
Toucht with the flame: on their whole Host I flew
Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
Their choicest youth; they only liv'd who fled.
Had *Judah* that day join'd, or one whole Tribe,
They had by this possess'd the tow'rs of *Gath*,
And lorded over them whom now they serve:
But what more oft in Nations grown corrupt,

And

And by their vices brought to servitude,
Than to love Bondage more than Liberty,
Bondage with ease than strenuous Liberty;
And to despise, or envy, or suspect
Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd
As their Deliv'rer; if he aught begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?
Chor. Thy words to my remembrance bring
How *Succoth* and the Fort of *Penuel*
Their great Deliverer contemn'd,
The matchless *Gideon*, in pursuit
Of *Madian* and her vanquisht Kings:
And how ingrateful *Ephraim*
Had dealt with *Jephtha*, who by argument,
Not worse than by his shield and spear,
Defended *Israel* from the *Ammonite*,
Had not his Prowess quell'd their pride
In that sore battle, when so many dy'd,
Without Reprieve adjudg'd to death,
For want of well pronouncing *Shibboleth*.
Sams. Of such examples add me to the roll;
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's propos'd deliverance not so.
Chor. Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to Men;
Unless there be who think not God at all;
If any be, they walk obscure:
For of such Doctrine never was there School,
But the heart of the Fool,
And no man therein Doctor but himself.

Yet

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts found contradicting;
Then give the reins to wandring thought,
Regardless of his Glory's diminution;
Till by their own perplexities involv'd,
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,
But never find self-satisfying solution.
As if they would confine th' interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our Laws to bind us, not himself,
And hath full right t'exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From National obstriction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own Laws he can best dispense.
He would not else, who never wanted means,
Nor in respect of th' enemy just cause
To set his People free,
Have prompted this Heroic *Nazarite*
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious Bride,
Unclean, unchaste.
Down Reason then, at least vain reasonings down,
Though Reason here aver
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Unchaste was subsequent, her stain not his.
But see! here comes thy rev'rend Sire
With careful step, Locks white as down,
Old *Manoa*: advise
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.
Samf. Ah me, another inward grief awak'd.

With

With mention of that name renews th'assault.

Man. Brethren and men of *Dan*, (for such ye seem,
Though in this uncouth place;) if old respect,
As I suppose, tow'rd your once glory'd friend,
My Son, now Captive, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age,
Came lagging after; say, if he be here.

Cher. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest; behold him where he lies.

Man. O miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible *Samson*, far renown'd,
The dread of *Israel*'s foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to Angels walk'd their streets,
None off'ring fight; who single combatant
Duell'd their Armies rank'd in proud array,
Himself an Army; now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spear's length? O ever-failing trust
In mortal strength! and oh! what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good
Pray'd for, but often proves our woe, our bane?
I pray'd for Children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a Son,
And such a Son, as all men hail'd me happy.
Who would be now a Father in my stead?
O wherefore did God grant me my request,
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest Pray'rs, then giv'n with solemn hand
As Graces, draw a Scorpion's tail behind?
For this did th'Angel twice descend? for this

Ordain'd

Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a Plant;
Select and Sacred, Glorious for a while,
The miracle of men; then in an hour
Enfnar'd, aſſaulted, overcome, led bound,
Thy Foes deriſion, Captive, Poor and Blind,
Into a Dungeon thruſt, to work with Slaves?
Alas! methinks whom God hath choſen once
To worthieſt deeds, if he through frailty err,
He ſhould not ſo o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
Subject him to ſo foul indignities,
Be it but for honour's ſake of former deeds.

Samſ. Appoint not heav'nly diſpoſition, Father;
Nothing of all theſe evils hath befall'n me
But juſtly: I myſelf have brought them on,
Sole Author, I, ſole cauſe: if aught ſeem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
The myſtery of God, giv'n me under pledge
Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
A *Canaanite*, my faithleſs enemy.
This well I knew, nor was at all ſurpriz'd,
But warn'd by oft experience; did not ſhe
Of *Timna* firſt betray me, and reveal
The ſecret wreſted from me in her height
Of Nuptial love profeſt, carrying it ſtraight
To them who had corrupted her, my Spies,
And Rivals? In this other was there found
More Faith? who alſo in her prime of love,
Spouſal embraces, vitiated with Gold,
Though offer'd only, by the ſcent conceiv'd
Her ſpurious firſt-born, Treaſon againſt me?
Thrice ſhe aſſay'd with ſtatt'ring pray'rs and ſighs,

And

And amorous reproaches to win from me
My capital secret, in what part my strength lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might know;
Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purpos'd to betray me, and (which was worse
Than undissembled hate) with what contempt
She thought to make me Traitor, to myself;
Yet the fourth time, when mustring all her wiles,
With blandisht parleys, feminine assaults,
Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night
To storm me over-watch'd, and weary'd out.
At times when men seek most repose and rest,
I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart;
Who, with a grain of manhood well resolv'd,
Might easily have shook off all her snares:
But foul effeminacy held me yok'd
Her bond-slave; O indignity! O blot
To Honour and Religion! servile mind
Rewarded well with servile punishment!
The base degree to which I now am fall'n,
These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base
As was my former servitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.

Man. I cannot praise thy Marriage-choices, Son,
Rather approv'd them not; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our *Foes*.

I ſtate not that; this I am ſure, our Foes
Found ſoon occaſion thereby to make thee
Their Captive, and their Triumph; thou the ſooner
Temptation found'ſt, or over-potent charms
To violate the ſacred truſt of ſilence
Depoſited within thee; which to have kept
Tacit, was in thy pow'r: true; and thou bear'ſt
Enough, and more the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly haſt thou paid, and ſtill art paying
That rigid ſcore. A worſe thing yet remains:
This day the *Philiſtins* a pop'lar Feaſt
Here celebrate in *Gaza*; and proclaim
Great Pomp, and Sacrifice, and Praiſes loud
To *Dagon*, as their God, who hath deliver'd
Thee, *Samſon*, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who ſlew'ſt them many a ſlain.
So *Dagon* ſhall be magnify'd, and God,
Beſides whom is no God, compar'd with Idols,
Diſglorify'd, blaſphem'd, and had in ſcorn
By the Idolatrous rout amidſt their wine;
Which to have come to paſs by means of thee,
Samſon, of all thy ſufferings think the heavieſt,
Of all reproach the moſt with ſhame, that ever
Could have befall'n thee, and thy Father's houſe.

Samſ. Father, I do acknowledge and confeſs
That I this honour, I this pomp have brought
To *Dagon*, and advanc'd his praiſes high
Among the Heathen round; to God have brought
Diſhonour, obloquy, and op'd the mouths
Of Idoliſts, and Atheiſts; have brought ſcandal
To *Iſrael*, diffidence of God, and doubt

In feeble hearts propenſe enough before
To waver, or fall off and join with Idols;
Which is my chief affliction, ſhame and ſorrow,
The anguiſh of my Soul, that ſuffers not
Mine eye to harbour ſleep, or thoughts to reſt.
This only hope relieves me, that the ſtrife
With me hath end; all the conteſt is now
'Twixt God and *Dagon*: *Dagon* hath preſum'd,
Me overthrown, to enter liſts with God,
His Deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of *Abraham*. He be ſure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd;
But will ariſe and his great name aſſert:
Dagon muſt ſtoop, and ſhall ere long receive
Such a diſcomfit as ſhall quite deſpoil him,
Of all theſe boaſted Trophies won on me,
And with confuſion blank his Worſhippers.

Man. With cauſe this hope relieves thee, and theſe words
I as a Prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his Name
Againſt all competition; nor will long
Endure it, doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or *Dagon*. But for thee what ſhall be done?
Thou muſt not in the mean while here forgot
Lie in this miſerable loathſom plight
Neglected. I already have made way
To ſome *Philiſtian* Lords, with whom to treat
About thy ranſom: well they may by this
Have ſatisfy'd their utmoſt of revenge
By pains and ſlav'ries, worſe than death, inflicted

On

On those, who now no more canſt do them harm.
Samſ. Spare that propoſal, Father, ſpare the trouble
Of that ſollicitation; let me here,
As I deſerve, pay on my puniſhment;
And expiate, if poſſible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have reveal'd
Secrets of men, the ſecrets of a friend,
How heinous had the fact been, how deſerving
Contempt and ſcorn of all, to be excluded
All friendſhip, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool ſet on his front? But I
God's counſel have not kept, his holy ſecret
Preſumptuouſly have publiſh'd, impiouſly,
Weakly at leaſt, and ſhamefully: A Sin
That *Gentiles* in their Parables condemn,
To their abyſs and horrid pains confin'd.
Man. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite,
But act not in thy own affliction, Son;
Repent the ſin, but if the puniſhment
Thou canſt avoid, ſelf-preſervation bids:
Or th'execution leave to high diſpoſal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyſelf. Perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who ever more approves, and more accepts
(Beſt pleas'd with humble and filial ſubmiſſion)
Him, who imploring mercy ſues for life,
Than who ſelf-rigorous chuſes death as due;
Which argues over-juſt, and ſelf-diſpleas'd
For ſelf-offence, more than for God offended.

Reject not then what offer'd means; who knows
But God hath set before us, to return thee
Home to thy Country and his sacred House,
Where thou may'st bring thy off'rings, to avert
His farther ire, with pray'rs and vows renew'd?

Samf. His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it? when in strength
All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes,
With youthful courage, and magnanimous thoughts
Of birth from Heav'n foretold and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of Acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The Sons of *Anak*, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty God,
I walk'd about, admir'd of all and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swoll'n with pride into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Soften'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitful Concubine, who shore me,
Like a tame Wether, all my precious fleece;
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shav'n and disarm'd among mine enemies.

Chor. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou could'st repress; nor did the dancing Ruby
Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavour of the smell,
Or taste, that cheers the heart of Gods and Men,
Allure thee from the cool Cryſtalline ſtream.

Samſ.

Samſ. Where-ever fountain or freſh current flow'd
Againſt the Eaſtern ray, tranſlucent, pure,
With touch ethereal of Heav'ns fiery rod,
I drank; from the clear milkie juice allaying
Thirſt, and refreſht; nor envy'd them the grape,
Whoſe heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Chor. O madneſs, to think uſe of ſtrongeſt wines
And ſtrongeſt drinks our chief ſupport of health,
When God with theſe forbidd'n made choice to rear
His mighty Champion, ſtrong above compare;
Whoſe drink was only from the liquid brook!

Samſ. But what avail'd this temp'rance, not compleat
Againſt another object more enticing?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the Foe,
Effeminately vanquiſh'd? by which means,
Now blind, diſheartn'd, ſham'd, diſhonour'd, quell'd,
To what can I be uſeful, wherein ſerve
My Nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd?
But to ſit idle on the Houſhold-hearth,
A burd'nous drone; to viſitants a gaze,
Or pity'd object; theſe redundant locks
Robuſtious to no purpoſe cluſtring down,
Vain monument of ſtrength: till length of years
And ſedentary numbneſs craze my limbs,
To a contemptible old Age obſcure.
Here rather let me drudge and earn my bread,
Till vermin or the draff of ſervile food
Conſume me, and oft invocated death
Haſten the welcome end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then ſerve *Philiſtians* with that gift
Which was expreſly giv'n thee to annoy them?
Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unimploy'd, with age outworn.
But God, who caus'd a Fountain at thy Pray'r
From the dry ground to ſpring, thy thirſt t' allay
After the brunt of Battel, can as eaſy
Cauſe light again within thy eyes to ſpring,
Wherewith to ſerve him better than thou haſt:
And I perſuade me ſo; why elſe this ſtrength
Miraculous yet remaining in thoſe locks?
His might continues in thee not for nought,
Nor ſhall his wondrous gifts be fruſtrate thus.

Samſ. All otherwiſe to me my thoughts portend;
That theſe dark Orbs no more ſhall treat with light,
Nor th' other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkneſs nigh at hand:
So much I feel my genial Spirits droop,
My hopes all flat, Nature within me ſeems
In all her functions weary of herſelf;
My race of Glory run, and race of Shame,
And I ſhall ſhortly be with them that reſt.

Man. Believe not theſe ſuggeſtions, which proceed
From anguiſh of the mind, and humours black,
That mingle with thy fancy. I however
Muſt not omit a Father's timely care
To proſecute the means of thy deliverance
By ranſom, or how elſe: mean while be calm,
And healing words from theſe thy friends admit.

Samſ. O that torment ſhould not be confin'd

To

To the body's wounds and sores,
With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breast, and reins;
But must secret passage find
To th' inmost mind;
There exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints and limbs,
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense!
My griefs not only pain me,
As a lingring disease,
But finding no redress, ferment and rage,
Nor less than wounds immedicable
Rankle, and fester, and gangreen,
To black mortification.
Thoughts, my Tormentors arm'd with deadly stings,
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
Nor breath of vernal Air from snowy *Alp*.
Sleep hath forsook and giv'n me o'er
To death's benumming Opium, as my only cure;
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of Heav'n's desertion.
I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
His destin'd from the womb,
Promis'd by Heav'nly message twice descending
Under his special eye
Abstemious I grew up, and thriv'd amain;

He led me on to mightiest deeds,
Above the nerve of mortal arm,
Against the uncircumcis'd, our enemies:
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
Left me all helpless, with th' irreparable loss
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless.
This one Prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.

Chor. Many are the Sayings of the Wise
In ancient and in modern books enroll'd,
Extolling Patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All-chances incident to man's frail life:
Consolatories writ
With study'd argument, and much persuasion sought,
Lenient of grief and anxious thought.
But to th'afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint;
Unless he feel within
Some sources of consolation from above;
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting Spirits uphold.

God of our Fathers! what is man!
That thou towards him with hand so various,

Or

Or might I ſay contrarious,
Temper'ſt thy providence through his ſhort courſe,
Not ev'nly, as thou rul'ſt
Th' Angelic orders and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute!
Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That wandring looſe about,
Grow up and periſh, as the ſummer-fly,
Heads without name no more remembred;
But ſuch as thou haſt ſolemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd,
To ſome great work, thy glory,
And people's ſafety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward theſe thus dignify'd, thou oft
Amidſt their height of noon,
Changeſt thy countenance, and thy hand with no regard
Of higheſt favours paſt
From thee on them, or them to thee of ſervice.
Nor only doſt degrade them, or remit
To life obſcur'd, which were a fair diſmiſſion,
But throw'ſt them lower than thou didſt exalt them high;
Unſeemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the treſpaſs or omiſſion;
Oft leav'ſt them to the hoſtile ſword
Of heathen and prophane, their carcaſes
To dogs and fowls a prey, or elſe captiv'd;
Or to th' unjuſt tribunals under change of times,
And condemnation of th' ingrateful multitude.
If theſe they 'ſcape, perhaps in poverty

With ſickneſs and diſeaſe thou bow'ſt them down,
Painful diſeaſes and deform'd,
In crude old age;
Though not diſordinate, yet cauſeleſs ſuffering
The puniſhment of diſſolute days; in fine,
Juſt or unjuſt, alike ſeem miſerable,
For oft alike, both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious Champion,
The Image of thy ſtrength and mighty Miniſter.
What do I beg? how haſt thou dealt already?
Behold him in his ſtate calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canſt, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of Sea or Land?
Female of ſex it ſeems,
That ſo bedeckt, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way ſailing,
Like a ſtately Ship
Of *Tarſus*, bound for th' Iſles
Of *Javan* or *Gadier*,
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd, and ſtreamers waving,
Courted by all the winds that hold them play;
An Amber ſcent of odorous perfume,
Her harbinger, a damſel train behind;
Some rich *Philiſtian* Matron ſhe may ſeem:
And now, at nearer view, no other certain
Than *Dalila* thy Wife.

Samſ. My Wife! my Trait'reſs! let her not come near me.

Chor. Yet on ſhe moves, now ſtands and eyes you fix'd,

About

About t'have ſpoke, but now, with head declin'd,
Like a fair flow'r ſurcharg'd with dew, ſhe weeps,
And words addreſs'd ſeem tears diſſolv'd,
Wetting the borders of her ſilken veil:
But now again ſhe makes addreſs to ſpeak.

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering reſolution
I came, ſtill dreading thy diſpleaſure, *Samſon*,
Which to have merited, without excuſe,
I cannot but acknowledge; yet if tears
May expiate, (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverſe event than I foreſaw)
My penance hath not ſlacken'd, though my pardon
No way aſſur'd. But conjugal affection
Prevailing over fear, and timorous doubt,
Hath led me on, deſirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy eſtate,
If aught in my ability may ſerve
To lighten what thou ſuffer'ſt, and appeaſe
Thy mind with what amends is in my pow'r;
Though late, yet in ſome part to recompenſe
My rash, but more unfortunate miſdeed.

Samſ. Out, out, *Hyæna*; theſe are thy wonted arts,
And arts of ev'ry woman falſe like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray;
Then as repentant to ſubmit, beſeech,
And reconcilement move with feign'd remorſe,
Confeſs, and promiſe wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her Husband, how far urg'd his patience bears,
His virtue or weakneſs which way to aſſail:
Then with more cautious and inſtructed skill

Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men full oft beguil'd,
With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Entangled with a pois'nous bosom snake,
If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
As I by thee, to Ages an example.

Dal. Yet hear me, *Samson*; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence,
But that on th' other side if it be weigh'd
By itself, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
Or else, with just allowance counterpois'd,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier tow'rds me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them; both common female faults:
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is, for nought,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?
To what I did thou shew'dst me first the way.
But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not;
Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's
Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parl,
So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not

More

More ſtrength from me, than in thyſelf was found.
And what if Love, which thou interpret'ſt Hate,
The jealouſie of Love, powerful of ſway,
In human hearts, nor leſs in mine tow'rds thee,
Caus'd what I did? I ſaw thee mutable
Of fancy, fear'd leſt one day thou would'ſt leave me
As her at *Timna*; ſought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmeſt:
No better way I ſaw than by importuning
To learn thy ſecrets, get into my pow'r
Thy key of ſtrength and ſafety: thou wilt ſay,
Why then reveal'd? I was aſſur'd by thoſe
Who tempted me, that nothing was deſign'd
Againſt thee but ſafe cuſtody, and hold.
That made for me, I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterpriſes,
While I at home ſat full of cares and fears,
Wailing thy abſence in my widow'd bed:
Here I ſhould ſtill enjoy thee day and night
Mine and Love's priſ'ner, not the *Philiſtins*,
Whole to myſelf, unhazarded abroad,
Fearleſs at home of partners in my love.
Theſe reaſons in Love's law have paſt for good,
Though fond and reaſonleſs to ſome perhaps;
And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much wo,
Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
Be not unlike all others, not auſtere
As thou art ſtrong, inflexible as ſteel:
If thou in ſtrength all mortals doſt exceed,
In uncompaſſionate anger do not ſo.

Sam. How cunningly the ſorcereſs diſplays

Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine? 820
That malice, nor repentance, brought thee hither,
By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, th' example;
I led the way: bitter reproach, but true.
I to myself was false, ere thou to me:
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly, 825
Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou feest
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
Confess it feign'd. Weakness is thy excuse,
And I believe it; weakness to resist 830
Philistian gold: if weakness may excuse,
What Murtherer, what Traitor, Parricide,
Incestuous, Sacrilegious, but may plead it?
All wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore
With God or Man will gain thee no remission. 835
But Love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage
To satisfie thy lust: Love seeks t' have Love; [way
My Love how could'st thou hope, who took'st the
To raise in me inexpiable hate,
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd? 840
In vain thou strivest to cover shame with shame,
For by evasion thy crime uncover'st more.

Dah. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
In man or woman; though to thy own condemning,
Hear what assaults I had, what sinnes besides, 845
What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
Which might have awe'd the best resolv'd of Men,
The constantest, t' have yielded without blame.
It was not Gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
That wrought with me: thou know'st the Magistrate

And

And Princes of my Country came in person;
Sollicited, commanded, threatned, urg'd,
Adjur'd by all the Bonds of civil Duty
And of Religion, press'd how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroy'd
Such numbers of our Nation: and the Priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the Gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of *Dagon*: what had I
T'oppose against such powerful Arguments?
Only my love of thee held long debate;
And combated in silence all their reasons
With hard contest. At length that grounded maxim,
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men, that to the public good
Private respects must yield, with grave authority
Took full possession of me, and prevail'd;
Virtue, as I thought, Truth, Duty so enjoining.

Sams. I thought where all thy circling wiles would
In feign'd Religion, smooth hypocrisie. [and;
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Been as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I before all the daughters of my Tribe
And of my Nation chose thee from among
My enemies; lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st,
Too well, unbeform'd all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but overpow'r'd
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;

Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
Didſt thou at firſt receive me for thy Huſband?
Then, as ſince then, thy country's foe profeſt?
Being once a Wife, for me thou waſt to leave
Parents and country; nor was I their ſubject,
Nor under their protection but my own;
Thou mine, not theirs. If aught againſt my life
Thy Country ſought of thee, it ſought unjuſtly,
Againſt the law of nature, law of nations;
No more thy country, but an impious crew
Of men conſpiring to uphold their ſtate
By worſe than hoſtile deeds, violating the ends
For which our Country is a name ſo dear;
Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee;
To pleaſe thy Gods thou didſt it; Gods unable
T' acquit themſelves and proſecute their Foes
But by ungodly deeds: The contradiction
Of their own Deity Gods cannot be;
Leſs therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd or fear'd.
Theſe falſe pretexts and varniſh'd colours failing,
Bare in thy guilt, how foul muſt thou appear?

Dal. In argument with Men a Woman ever
Goes by the worſe, whatever be her cauſe.

Samſ. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath;
Witneſs when I was worried with thy peals.

Dal. I was a fool, too raſh, and quite miſtaken
In what I thought would have ſucceeded beſt.
Let me obtain forgiveneſs of thee, *Samſon*,
Afford me place to ſhew what recompence
Towards thee I intend for what I have miſdone,
Miſguided; only what remains paſt cure
Bear

Bear not too ſenſibly, nor ſtill inſiſt
T' afflict thyſelf in vain: tho' ſight be loſt,
Life yet hath many ſolaces, enjoy'd
Where other ſenſes want not their delights,
At home in leiſure and domeſtic eaſe,
Exempt from many a care and chance, to which
Eye-ſight expoſes daily men abroad.
I to the Lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathſome priſon-houſe, t' abide
With me; where my redoubled love and care
With nurſing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age,
With all things grateful chear'd, and ſo ſupply'd,
That what by me thou haſt loſt thou leaſt ſhalt miſs.

Samſ. No, no, of my condition take no care;
It fits not; thou and I long ſince are twain;
Nor think me ſo unwary or accurſt
To bring my feet again into the ſnare
Where once I have been caught: I know thy trains,
Tho' dearly to my coſt, thy gins, and toils:
Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms
No more on me have pow'r, their force is null'd;
So much of Adder's wiſdom I have learnt
To fence my ear againſt thy Sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and ſtrength, when all men
Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone could'ſt hate me
Thy Huſband, ſlight me, ſell me, and forego me;
How would'ſt thou uſe me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable, in moſt things as a child
Helpleſs, thence eaſily contemn'd, and ſcorn'd,

And

And last neglected? How would'ſt thou inſult,
When I muſt live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thraldom, how again betray me,
Bearing my words and doings to the Lords,
To gloſs upon, and cenſuring, frown or ſmile?
This Gaol I count the Houſe of Liberty
To thine, whoſe Doors my feet ſhall never enter.

Dal. Let me approach at leaſt, and touch thy hand.

Samſ. Not for thy life; leſt fierce remembrance wake
My ſudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At diſtance I forgive thee, go with that;
Bewail thy falſhood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illuſtrious Women, faithful Wives:
Cherish thy haſten'd widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treaſon: ſo farewel.

Dal. I ſee thou art implacable, more deaf
To pray'rs than winds and ſeas; yet winds to ſeas
Are reconcil'd at length, and ſea to ſhore:
Thy anger unappeaſable, ſtill rages,
Eternal Tempeſt never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus myſelf, and ſuing
For Peace, reap nothing but repulſe and hate?
Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounc'd?
To mix with thy concernments I deſiſt
Henceforth, nor too much diſapprove my own.
Fame, if not double-fac'd, is double-mouth'd,
And with contrary blaſt proclaims moſt deeds,
On both his wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greateſt names in his wild airy flight.

My

My name perhaps among the circumcis'd
In *Dan*, in *Judah*, and the bordering Tribes,
To all posterity may stand defam'd,
With malediction mention'd, and the blot
Of falshood most unconjugal traduc'd:
But in my country where I most desire,
In *Ecron*, *Gaza*, *Asdod*, and in *Gath*
I shall be named among the famousest
Of Women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock-bands; my tomb
With odours visited and annual flow'rs;
Not hast thou won'd than in Mount *Ephraim*,
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote *Sisera* sleeping through the Temples nail'd.
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The public marks of honour and reward
Conferr'd upon me, for the piety
Which to my country I was judg'd t'have shewn.
At this whoever envies or repines,
I leave him to his lot, and like my own.
Chor. She's gone, a manifest Serpent by her sting
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.
Sams. So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To such a viper his most sacred trust
Of secrecy, my safety and my life.
Chor. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange
After offence returning, to regain
Love once possest; nor can be easily

Repulst,

Repulst, without much inward passion felt,
And secret sting of amorous remorse.
Sams. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock-treachery endang'ring life.
Chor. It is not virtue, wisdom, valor, wit,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,
That Woman's love can win or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit,
(Which way soever Men refer it)
Much like thy riddle, *Samson*, in one day
Or seven, though one should musing sit:
If any of these or all, the *Timnian* Bride
Had not so soon preferr'd
Thy Paranymph, worthless to thee compar'd,
Successor in thy Bed,
Nor both so loosly disally'd
Their Nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal Harvest of thy Head.
Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavish'd on their Sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgment scant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend,
Or value what is best
In choice, but oftest to affect the wrong?
Or was too much of self-love mixt,
Of constancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing or not long?
Whate'er it be, to wisest Men and best
Seeming at first all heav'nly under virgin Veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure;

Once

Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a Thorn
Intestine, war within defensive arms,
A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent; or by her charms
Draws him awry, enslav'd
With dotage, and his sense deprav'd
To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What Pilot so expert but needs must wreck,
Embark'd with such a Steers-mate at the Helm?
Favour'd of Heav'n, who finds
One virtuous rarely found,
That in domestic good combines:
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But virtue, which breaks through all opposition,
And all temptation can remove,
Most shines, and most is acceptable above.
Therefore God's universal Law
Gave to the Man despotic power
Over his Female in due awe,
Non from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or lower:
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not sway'd
By female usurpation, nor dismay'd.
But we had best retire, I see a storm.
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less abstruse, my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no inchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honied words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward, I know him by his stride,

The

The Giant *Harapha* of *Gath*, his look
Haughty, as is a pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither
I less conjecture, than when first I saw
The sumptuous *Dalila* floating this way:
His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

Samf. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

Chor. His fraught we soon shall know, he now arrives.

Har. I come not, *Samson*, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of *Gath*,
Men call me *Harapha*, of stock renown'd,
As *Og* or *Anak*, and the *Emims* old
That *Kiriathaim* held; thou knowst me now,
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats performed
Incredible to me, in this displeased,
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have try'd
Each other's force in camp or listed field:
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Samf. The way to know were not to see but taste.

Har. Dost thou already single me? I thought
Gives and the Mill had tamed thee. O that fortune
Had brought me to the Field, where thou art fam'd
T' have wrought such wonders with an Ass's jaw;
I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,
Or left thy carcase where the Ass lay thrown:

So

So had the glory of Prowess been recover'd
To *Palestine*, won by a *Philistin*
From the unfortunate race, of whom thou bear'st
The highest name for valiant Acts; that honour
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out. [but do
Sams. Boast not of what thou wouldst have done,
What then thou wouldst, thou feelst it in thy hand.
Har. To combat with a blind Man I disdain;
And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.
Sams. Such usage as your honourable Lords
Afford me, assassinated and betray'd;
Who durst not with their whole united pow'rs
In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
Nor in the house with chamber Ambushes
Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold
Breaking her Marriage-Faith, to circumvent me.
Therefore without feign'd shifts let be assign'd
Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy Helmet
And Brigandine of brass, thy broad Habergeon,
Vant-brass, and Greaves, and Gauntlet, add thy Spear
A Weaver's beam, and seven times folded shield;
I only with an Oaken staff will meet thee,
And raise such outcries on thy clatter'd Iron,
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head;
That in a little time while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt with thyself at *Gath*, to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done

To *Samson*, but shalt never see *Gath* more.
Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms
Which greatest Heroes have in battle worn,
Their ornament and safety, had not spells
And black enchantments, some Magician's Art,
Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong; which thou from Heav'n
Feign'st at thy Birth was giv'n thee in thy Hair,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy Hairs
Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back
Of chaf'd wild Boars, or ruffl'd Porcupines.
Sam. I know no Spells, use no forbidden Arts;
My trust is in the living God, who gave me
At my Nativity this strength, diffus'd
No less through all my sinews, joints and bones,
Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if *Dagon* be thy God,
Go to his Temple, invocate his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve those magic Spells,
Which I to be the power of *Israel*'s God
Avow, and challenge *Dagon* to the test,
Offring to combat thee his Champion bold,
With th' utmost of his Godhead seconded:
Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.
Har. Presume not on thy God; whate'er he be,
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and deliver'd up

Into

Into thy Enemies hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and fetter'd send thee
Into the common Prison, there to grind
Among the Slaves and Asses thy comrades,
As good for nothing else; no better service
With those thy boyst'rous locks, no worthy match
For Valour to assail, nor by the sword
Of noble Warriour, so to stain his honour,
But by the Barber's razor best subdu'd.

Samf. All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant;
In confidence whereof I once again
Defie thee to the trial of mortal fight,
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine, or whom I with *Israel*'s Sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A Murtherer, a Revolter, and a Robber.

Samf. Tongue-doughty Giant, how dost thou prove me these?

Har. Is not thy Nation subject to our Lords?
Their Magistrates confest it, when they took thee
As a League-breaker, and deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murther on those thirty men
At *Askalon*, who never did thee harm;
Then like a Robber strip'dst them of their robes?

The

The *Philiſtins*, when thou hadſt broke the league,
Went up with armed pow'rs, thee only ſeeking,
To others did no violence nor ſpoil.
Samſ. Among the Daughters of the *Philiſtins*
I choſe a Wife, which argu'd me no foe;
And in your City held my nuptial Feaſt:
But your ill-meaning Politician Lords,
Under pretence of bridal friends and gueſts,
Appointed to await me thirty Spies;
Who threatning cruel death conſtrain'd the Bride
To wring from me and tell to them my ſecret,
That ſolv'd the riddle which I had propos'd.
When I perceiv'd all ſet on enmity,
As on my enemies, where ever chanc'd,
I us'd hoſtility, and took their ſpoil
To pay my Underminers in their coin.
My Nation was ſubjected to your Lords:
It was the force of Conqueſt; force with force
Is well ejected when the Conquer'd can.
But I a private perſon, whom my Country
As a league-breaker gave up bound, preſum'd
Single Rebellion, and did hoſtile Acts:
I was no private perſon, but was rais'd
With ſtrength ſufficient and command from Heav'n
To free my Country; if their ſervile minds
Me their deliverer ſent would not receive,
But to their Maſters gave me up for nought,
Th' unworthier they; whence to this day they ſerve.
I was to do my part from Heav'n aſſign'd,
And had perform'd it if my known offence
Had not diſabled me, not all your force.

Theſe

Theſe ſhifts refuted, anſwer thy appellant,
Though by his blindneſs maim'd for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to ſingle fight,
As a petty enterpriſe of ſmall enforce.
Har. With thee, a Man condemn'd, a Slave enroll'd,
Due by the Law to capital puniſhment?
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.
Samſ. Cam'ſt thou for this, vain boaſter, to ſurvey
To deſcant on my ſtrength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer, part not hence ſo ſlight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand ſurvey not thee.
Har. O *Baal-zebub!* can my ears unus'd
Hear theſe diſhonours, and not render death?
Samſ. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fiſt is free.
Har. This inſolence other kind of anſwer fits.
Samſ. Go, baffl'd coward, leſt I run upon thee,
Though in theſe chains, bulk without ſpirit vaſt,
And with one buffet lay thy ſtructure low;
Or ſwing thee in the Air, then daſh thee down
To th' hazard of thy brains and ſhatter'd ſides.
Har. By *Aſtaroth* ere long thou ſhalt lament
Theſe braveries, in Irons loaden on thee.
Chor. His Giantſhip is gone ſomewhat creſt-fall'n,
Stalking with leſs unconſcionable ſtrides,
And lower looks, but in a ſultry chafe.
Samſ. I dread him not, nor all his Giant-brood,
Tho' fame divulge him Father of five Sons,
All of Gigantic ſize, *Goliah* chief.
Chor. He will directly to the Lords, I fear.

And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet farther to afflict thee.
Samſ. He must alledge some cauſe, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, left a queſtion riſe
Whether he durſt accept the offer or not:
And that he durſt not, plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impoſe, nor I ſuſtain;
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no ſmall profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadlieſt Foe will prove
My ſpeedieſt Friend, by death to rid me hence,
The worſt that he can give, to me the beſt.
Yet ſo it may fall out, becauſe their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the dead.
Chor. Oh! how comely it is, and how reviving
To the Spirits of juſt men long oppreſt;
When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, th' oppreſſor,
The brute and boiſt'rous force of violent men,
Hardy and induſtrious to ſupport
Tyrannic pow'r, but raging to purſue
The righteous and all ſuch as honour Truth!
He all their Ammunition
And feats of War defeats,
With plain Heroic magnitude of mind
And celeſtial vigour arm'd,
Their Armories and Magazines contemns,

Renders

Renders them useless, while
With winged expedition,
Swift as the light'ning glance, he executes
His errand on the wicked; who surpriz'd
Lose their defence, distracted and amaz'd.
But patience is more oft the exercise
Of Saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own Deliverer,
And Victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
Either of these is in thy lot,
Samson, with might endu'd
Above the Sons of men; but sight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with those
Whom Patience finally must crown.
This Idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands.
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind;
For I descry this way
Some other tending, in his hand
A Sceptre or quaint Staff he bears,
Comes on amain, speed in his look;
By his habit I discern him now
A public Officer, and now at hand;
His message will be short and voluble.

Off. Hebrews, the Pris'ner *Samson* here I seek.

Chor. His manacles remark him, there he sits.

Off. Samson, to thee our Lords thus bid me say;
This day to *Dagon* is a solemn Feast,
With Sacrifices, Triumph, Pomp, and Games:

Thy ſtrength they know ſurpaſſing human rate,
And now ſome public proof thereof require
To honour this great Feaſt, and great Aſſembly.
Riſe therefore with all ſpeed, and come along,
Where I will ſee thee heartned and freſh clad
T' appear as fits before th' illuſtrious Lords.
Samſ. Thou know'ſt I am an *Hebrew*, therefore tell them
Our Law forbids at their religious Rites
My preſence; for that cauſe I cannot come.
Off. This anſwer, be aſſur'd, will not content them.
Samſ. Have they not Sword-players, and ev'ry ſort
Of Gymnic Artiſts, Wreſtlers, Riders, Runners,
Juglers and Dancers, Antics, Mummers, Mimics,
But they muſt pick me out with ſhackles tir'd,
And over-labour'd at their public Mill,
To make them ſport with blind activity?
Do they not ſeek occaſion of new quarrels
On my refuſal to diſtreſs me more,
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou cam'ſt, I will not come.
Off. Regard thyſelf, this will offend them highly.
Samſ. Myſelf? my conſcience and internal peace.
Can they think me ſo broken, ſo debas'd
With corporal ſervitude, that my mind ever
Will condeſcend to ſuch abſurd commands,
Altho' their drudge, to be their fool or jeſter;
And in my midſt of ſorrow and heart-grief
To ſhew them feats, and play before their god,
The worſt of all indignities, yet on me,
Join'd with extreme contempt? I will not come.
Off. My meſſage was impos'd on me with ſpeed,

Brooks

Brooks no delay: is this thy reſolution? 1344
Samſ. So take it with what ſpeed thy meſſage needs.
Off. I am ſorry what this ſtoutneſs will produce.
Samſ. Perhaps thou ſhalt have cauſe to ſorrow indeed.
Chor. Conſider, *Samſon*; matters now are ſtrain'd
Up to the heighth, whether to hold or break:
He's gone, and who knows how he may report 1350
Thy words, by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another meſſage more imperious,
More Lordly thund'ring than thou well wilt bear.
Samſ. Shall I abuſe this conſecrated gift
Of ſtrength, again returning with my hair 1355
After my great tranſgreſſion; ſo requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater ſin,
By proſtituting holy things to idols;
A *Nazarite* in place abominable
Vaunting my ſtrength in honour to their *Dagon*? 1360
Beſides, how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, prophane?
Chor. Yet with this ſtrength thou ſerv'ſt the *Phi-*
Idolatrous, uncircumcis'd, unclean. [*liſtins*,
Samſ. Not in their Idol-worſhip, but by labour
Honeſt and lawful, to deſerve my food 1366
Of thoſe who have me in their civil power.
Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts
defile not. [holds:
Samſ. Where outward force conſtrains, the ſentence
But who conſtrains me to the Temple of *Dagon*,
Not dragging? the *Philiſtian* Lords command: 1371
Commands are no conſtraints. If I obey them,

I do it freely, vent'ring to displeaſe
God for the fear of Man, and Man prefer,
Set God behind: which in his jealouſie
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveneſs.
Yet that he may diſpenſe with me or thee,
Preſent in Temples at idolatrous Rites
For ſome important cauſe, thou need'ſt not doubt.
Chor. How thou wilt here come off ſurmounts my reach.
Samſ. Be of good courage; I begin to feel
Some rouzing motions in me, which diſpoſe
To ſomething extraordinary my thoughts.
I with this meſſenger will go along,
Nothing to do, be ſure, that may diſhonour
Our Law, or ſtain my vow of *Nazarite*.
If there be aught of preſage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By ſome great act, or of my days the laſt.
Chor. In time thou haſt reſolv'd; the man returns.
Off. Samſon, this ſecond meſſage from our Lords
To thee I am bid ſay: Art thou our Slave,
Our Captive, at the public Mill our drudge,
And dar'ſt thou at our ſending and command
Diſpute thy coming? come without delay;
Or we ſhall find ſuch Engines to aſſail
And hamper thee, as thou ſhalt come of force,
Though thou wert firmlier faſtn'd than a Rock.
Samſ. I could be well content to try their Art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious:
Yet knowing their advantages too many,
Becauſe they ſhall not trail me through their ſtreets

Like

Like a wild Beast, I am content to go.
Masters commands come with a power resistless
To such as owe them absolute subjection:
And for a life who will not change his purpose?
(So mutable are all the ways of men.)
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous, or forbidden in our Law.
Off. I praise thy resolution, doff these links:
By this compliance thou wilt win the Lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.
Sams. Brethren farewel; your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with Friends; and how the sight
Of me as of a common Enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them,
I know not: Lords are Lordliest in their wine;
And the well-feasted Priest then soonest fir'd
With zeal, if aught Religion seem concern'd:
Nor less the People on their Holy-days
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable.
Happ'n what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our Law, my Nation or myself;
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.
Chor. Go, and the Holy One
Of *Israel* be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his
Great name among the Heathen round;
Send thee the Angel of thy Birth to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy Father's field
Rode up in flames, after his message told

Of thy conception, and be now a ſhield
Of fire; that Spirit that firſt ruſht on thee
In the camp of *Dan*
Be efficacious in thee now at need:
For never was from Heav'n imparted
Meaſure of ſtrength ſo great to mortal ſeed,
As in thy wond'rous actions hath been ſeen.
But wherefore comes old *Manoa* in ſuch haſte
With youthful ſteps? much livelier than ere while
He ſeems: ſuppoſing here to find his Son,
Or of him bringing to us ſome glad news? [hither
Man. Peace with you, Brethren; my inducement
Was not at preſent here to find my Son,
By order of the Lords new parted hence
To come and play before them at their Feaſt.
I heard all as I came; the City rings,
And numbers thither flock: I had no will,
Leſt I ſhould ſee him forc'd to things unſeemly.
But that which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly
To give you part with me what hope I have
With good ſucceſs to work his liberty.
Chor. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee: ſay, Reverend Sire; we thirſt to hear.
Man. I have attempted one by one the Lords
Either at home, or through the high ſtreet paſſing,
With ſupplication prone, and Father's tears,
T' accept of ranſom for my Son their priſ'ner.
Some much averſe I found and wondrous harſh,
Contemptuous, proud, ſet on revenge and ſpite;
That part moſt reverenc'd *Dagon* and his prieſts:
Others more moderate ſeeming, but their aim

Private

Private reward, for which both God and State
They eaſily would ſet to ſale: a third
More generous far and civil, who confeſs'd
They had enough reveng'd, having reduc'd
Their foe to miſery beneath their fears,
The reſt was magnanimity to remit,
If ſome convenient ranſom was propos'd.
What noiſe or ſhout was that? it tore the Skie.
Chor. Doubtleſs the people ſhouting, to behold
Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
Or at ſome proof of ſtrength before them ſhown.
Man. His ranſom, if my whole inheritance
May compaſs it, ſhall willingly be paid
And number'd down: much rather I ſhall chuſe
To live the pooreſt in my Tribe, than richeſt,
And he in that calamitous priſon left.
No, I am fixt not to part hence without him;
For his redemption all my Patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forego
And quit: not wanting him, I ſhall want nothing.
Chor. Fathers are wont to lay up for their Sons,
Thou for thy Son art bent to lay out all;
Sons wont to nurſe their Parents in old age,
Thou in old age car'ſt how to nurſe thy Son,
Made older than thy age through eye-ſight loſt.
Man. It ſhall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him ſitting in the houſe, enobl'd
With all thoſe high exploits by him atchiev'd,
And on his ſhoulders waving down thoſe locks,
That of a Nation arm'd the ſtrength contain'd:

And, I perſuade me, God had not permitted
His ſtrength again to grow up with his hair,
Garriſon'd round about him like a Camp
Of faithful Soldiery, were not his purpoſe
To uſe him farther yet in ſome great ſervice;
Not to ſit idle with ſo great a gift
Uſeleſs, and thence ridiculous about him.
And ſince his ſtrength with eye-ſight was not loſt,
God will reſtore him eye-ſight to his ſtrength.

Chor. Thy hopes are not ill founded, nor ſeem vain
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd, agreeable to a Father's love;
In both which we, as next, participate. [noiſe!

Man. I know your friendly minds and---O what
Mercy of Heav'n, what hideous noiſe was that,
Horribly loud, unlike the former ſhout!

Chor. Noiſe call you it, or univerſal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation periſh'd?
Blood, death, and deathful deeds are in that noiſe,
Ruin, deſtruction at the utmoſt point.

Man. Of ruin indeed me-thought I heard the noiſe:
Oh! it continues; they have ſlain my Son.

Chor. Thy Son is rather ſlaying them; that outcry
From ſlaughter of one Foe could not aſcend.

Man. Some diſmal accident it needs muſt be;
What ſhall we do? ſtay here, or run and ſee?

Chor. Beſt keep together here, leſt running thither
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the *Philiſtins* is fall'n;
From whom could elſe a general cry be heard?
The ſufferers then will ſcarce moleſt us here;

From

From other hands we need not much to fear.
What if his eye-ſight (for to *Iſrael's* God
Nothing is hard) by miracle reſtor'd,
He now be dealing dole among his Foes,
And over heaps of ſlaughter'd walk his way?
Man. That were a joy preſumptuous to be thought.
Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?
Man. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet hope would fain ſubſcribe and tempts belief:
A little ſtay will bring ſome notice hither.
Chor. Of good or bad ſo great, of bad the ſooner;
For evil news rides poſt, while good news baits.
And to our wiſh I ſee one hither ſpeeding,
An *Hebrew*, as I gueſs, and of our Tribe.
Meſſ. O whither ſhall I run, or which way flie
The ſight of this ſo horrid ſpectacle,
Which erſt my eyes beheld, and yet behold?
For dire imagination ſtill purſues me.
But Providence, or inſtinct of Nature ſeems,
Or Reaſon, though diſturb'd, and ſcarce conſulted
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee firſt, reverend *Manoa*, and to theſe
My countrymen; whom here I knew remaining,
As at ſome diſtance from the place of horror,
So in the ſad event too much concern'd.
Man. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs, thou ſeeſt we long to know.
Meſſ. It would burſt forth; but I recover breath
And ſenſe diſtract, to know well what I utter.

Man.

Man. Tell us the ſum, the circumſtance deſer.
Meſſ. Gaza yet ſtands, but all her Sons are fall'n;
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.
Man. Sad, but thou know'ſt to *Iſraelites* not faddeſt
The deſolation of a hoſtile City.
Meſſ. Feed on that firſt; there may in grief be ſurfeit.
Man. Relate by whom. *Meſſ.* By *Samſon*. *Man.*
That ſtill leſſens
The ſorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
Meſſ. Ah! *Manoa*, I refrain, too ſuddenly
To utter what will come at laſt too ſoon;
Leſt evil tidings, with too rude irruption
Hitting thy aged ear, ſhould pierce too deep.
Man. Suſpenſe in news is torture; ſpeak them out.
Meſſ. Then take the worſt in brief, *Samſon* is
dead.
Man. The worſt indeed: O all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who ſets all free,
Hath paid his ranſom now and full diſcharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd,
Hopeful of his Deliv'ry, which now proves
Abortive, as the firſt-born bloom of Spring,
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's froſt?
Yet, ere I give the reins to grief, ſay firſt,
How dy'd he? death to life is crown or ſhame.
All by him fell thou ſay'ſt; by whom fell he?
What glorious hand gave *Samſon* his death's wound?
Meſſ. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.
Man. Wearied with ſlaughter then, or how? ex-
Meſſ. By his own hands. [plain.
Man. Self-violence! what cauſe
Brought

Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his Foes?
Mess. Inevitable cause,
At once both to destroy and be destroyed:
The Edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.
Man. O lastly over-strong against thyself!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us if thou canst,
(Eye-witness of what first or last was done,)
Relation more particular and distinct.
Mess. Occasions drew me early to this City,
And as the gates I enter'd with Sun-rise,
The Morning Trumpets Festival proclaim'd
Through each high-street: little I had dispatch'd,
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day
Samson should be brought forth to shew the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games.
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious Theatre,
Half-round, on two main Pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the Lords, and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under Skie might stand;
I among those aloof obscurely stood.
The Feast and Noon grew high, and Sacrifice
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high chear and wine,
When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately

Was

Was *Samson* as a public ſervant brought,
In their ſtate Livery clad; before him Pipes
And Timbrels; on each ſide went armed guards,
Both horſe and foot, before him and behind
Archers, and Slingers, Cataphracts, and Spears.
At ſight of him the people with a ſhout
Rifted the Air, clamouring their God with praiſe,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He patient, but undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place; and what was ſet before him,
Which without help of eye might be eſſay'd,
To heave, pull, draw, and break, he ſtill perform'd
All with incredible ſtupendous force,
None daring to appear Antagoniſt.
At length for intermiſſion-ſake they led him
Between the Pillars; he his guide requeſted
(For ſo from ſuch as nearer ſtood we heard)
As overtir'd, to let him lean a while
With both his arms on thoſe two maſſie Pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main ſupport.
He unſuſpicious led him; which when *Samſon*
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd,
And eyes faſt fixt, he ſtood as one who pray'd,
Or ſome great matter in his mind revolv'd;
At laſt with head erect thus cry'd aloud.
Hitherto, Lords, what your commands impos'd
I have perform'd, as reaſon was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld:
Now of my own accord ſuch other trial
I mean to ſhew you of my ſtrength, yet greater,
As with amaze ſhall ſtrike all who behold.

This

This utter'd, straining all his nerves he bow'd,
As with the force of winds and waters pent,
When Mountains tremble, those two massie Pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and drew
The whole roof after them, with burst of thunder,
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, Ladies, Captains, Counsellors, or Priests,
Their choice Nobility and Flower, not only
Of this but each *Philistian* City round,
Met from all parts to solemnize this Feast.
Samson with these immixt, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
The vulgar only scap'd, who stood without.

Chor. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
The work for which thou wast foretold
To *Israel*, and now ly'st victorious
Among thy slain self-kill'd,
Not willingly, but tangl'd in the fold
Of dire necessity; whose law in death conjoin'd
Thee with thy slaughter'd Foes, in number more
Than all thy life had slain before.

Semichor. While their hearts were jocund and sub-
Drunk with Idolatry, drunk with Wine, [lime,
And fat regorg'd of Bulls and Goats,
Chaunting their Idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread, who dwells
In *Silo*, his bright Sanctuary;
Among them he a spirit of phrenzie sent,
Who hurt their minds,

And

And urg'd them on with mad desire
To call in haste for their destroyer:
They, only set on sport and play,
Unweetingly importun'd
Their own destruction to come speedy on them.
So fond are mortal men,
Fall'n into wrath divine,
As their own ruin on themselves t' invite,
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
And with blindness internal struck.
Semichor. But he, though blind of sight,
Despis'd, and thought extinguish'd quite,
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue rous'd
From under ashes into sudden flame;
And as ev'ning Dragon came,
Assailant on the perched roosts,
And nests in order rang'd
Of tame villatic Fowl; but as an Eagle,
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
So virtue giv'n for lost,
Depress, and overthrown, as seem'd
Like that self-begott'n Bird
In the *Arabian* Woods embost,
That no second knows, nor third,
And lay ere while a Holocaust,
From out her ashie womb now teem'd,
Revives, re-flourishes, then vigorous most,
When most unactive deem'd,
And though her body die, her fame survives,
A secular Bird ages of lives.

Man.

Man. Come, come, no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cauſe; *Samſon* hath quit himſelf
Like *Samſon*, and heroickly hath finiſh'd
A life Heroic; on his Enemies
Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,
And lamentation to the Sons of *Caphtor*
Through all *Philiſtian* bounds; to *Iſrael*
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them
Find courage to lay hold on this occaſion,
T' himſelf and Father's houſe eternal fame:
And, which is beſt and happieſt yet, all this
With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,
But favouring and aſſiſting to the end.
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
Or knock the breaſt, no weakneſs, no contempt,
Diſpraiſe, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
And what may quiet us in a death ſo noble.
Let us go find the Body, where it lies
Soak'd in his enemies blood, and from the ſtream
With lavers pure and cleanſing herbs waſh off
The clotted gore. I with what ſpeed the while
(*Gaza* is not in plight to ſay us nay)
Will ſend for all my kindred, all my friends,
To fetch him hence, and ſolemnly attend
With ſilent obſequy and funeral train
Home to his Father's houſe: there will I build him
A Monument, and plant it round with ſhade
Of Laurel ever-green, and branching Palm,
With all his Trophies hung, and Acts enroll'd
In copious Legend, or ſweet Lyric Song.
Thither ſhall all the valiant Youth reſort,

And

And from his memory inflame their breasts
To matchless valour, and adventures high:
The Virgins also shall on feastful days
Visit his Tomb with flowers, only bewailing
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

Chor. All is best, though we oft doubt
What th' unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns,
And to his faithful Champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence *Gaza* mourns,
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrouled intent:
His Servant he with new acquist
Of true experience from this great event,
With peace and consolation hath dismist,
And calm of mind, all passion spent.

THE END.

POEMS, &c.

UPON

SEVERAL OCCASIONS,

IN

ENGLISH *and* LATIN, &c.

Compos'd at ſeveral times.

By *JOHN MILTON.*

----- *Baccare frontem*
Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro.
Virgil. Eclog. 7.

LYCIDAS.

In this Monody the Author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drown'd in his paſſage from Cheſter *on the* Iriſh *Seas*, 1637. *And by occaſion foretells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy then in their height.*

YET once more, O ye Laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with Ivy never-ſear,
I come to pluck your Berries harſh and crude,
And with forc'd fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter conſtraint, and ſad occaſion dear,
Compels me to diſturb your ſeaſon due;
For *Lycidas* is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young *Lycidas*, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not ſing for *Lycidas*? he knew
Himſelf to ſing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He muſt not flote upon his watry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of ſome melodious tear.

Be

Begin then, Siſters of the ſacred well,
That from beneath the ſeat of *Jove* doth ſpring,
Begin, and ſomewhat loudly ſweep the ſtring.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuſe:
So may ſome gentle Muſe
With lucky words favour my deſtin'd Urn;
And as he paſſes turn,
And bid fair peace be to my ſable ſhroud.
For we were nurſt upon the ſelf-ſame hill,
Fed the ſame flock, by fountain, ſhade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high Lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the Gray-fly winds her ſultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the freſh dews of night,
Oft till the Star, that roſe at Ev'ning bright,
Toward Heav'n's deſcent had ſlop'd his weſtering wheel.
Mean while the Rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th'Oaten Flute;
Rough *Satyrs* danc'd, and *Fauns* with cloven heel
From the glad ſound would not be abſent long,
And old *Damœtas* lov'd to hear our ſong.
But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never muſt return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the Woods, and deſart Caves
With wild Thyme and the gadding Vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn.
The Willows, and the Hazel Copſes green,
Shall now no more be ſeen,
Fanning their joyous Leaves to thy ſoft layes.
As killing as the Canker to the Roſe,

Or

Or taint-worm to the weanling Herds that graze,
Or Froſt to Flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When firſt the White-Thorn blows;
Such, *Lycidas*, thy loſs to Shepherds ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorſeleſs deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd *Lycidas*?
For neither were ye playing on the ſteep,
Where your old *Bards*, the famous *Druids*, lie,
Nor on the ſhaggy top of *Mona* high,
Nor yet where *Deva* ſpreads her wiſard ſtream:
Ah me, I fondly dream!
Had ye been there---for what could that have done?
What could the Muſe herſelf, that *Orpheus* bore,
The Muſe herſelf for her inchanting ſon,
Whom univerſal nature did lament,
When by the rout, that made the hideous roar,
His goary viſage down the ſtream was ſent,
Down the ſwift *Hebrus* to the *Lesbian* ſhore?

Alas! what boots it with inceſſant care
To tend the homely ſlighted Shepherds trade,
And ſtrictly meditate the thankleſs Muſe?
Were it not better done, as others uſe,
To ſport with *Amaryllis* in the ſhade,
Or with the tangles of *Neæra*'s hair?
Fame is the ſpur that the clear ſpirit doth raiſe
(That laſt infirmity of noble mind)
To ſcorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair Guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burſt out into ſudden blaze,
Comes the blind *Fury* with th' abhorred ſhears,
And ſlits the thin-ſpun life.---But not the praiſe,

Phœbus

Phœbus reply'd, and touch'd my trembling ears:
Fame is no plant that grows on mortal ſoil,
Nor in the gliſtering foil
Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumour lies;
But lives and ſpreads aloft by thoſe pure eyes
And perfect witneſs of all-judging *Jove*:
As he pronounces laſtly on each deed,
Of ſo much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed.
O Fountain *Arethuſe*, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth-ſliding *Mincius*, crown'd with vocal reeds,
That ſtrain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my Oate proceeds,
And liſtens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came in *Neptune*'s plea;
He aſk'd the Waves, and aſk'd the Felon Winds,
What hard miſhap hath doom'd this gentle Swain;
And queſtion'd every guſt of rugged winds,
That blows from off each beaked Promontory:
They knew not of his ſtory,
And ſage *Hippotades* their anſwer brings,
That not a blaſt was from his dungeon ſtray'd;
The air was calm, and on the level brine,
Sleek *Panope* with all her ſiſters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious Bark,
Built in th' eclipſe, and rig'd with curſes dark,
That ſunk ſo low that ſacred head of thine.
Next *Camus*, reverend Sire, went footing ſlow,
His Mantle hairy, and his Bonnet ſedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that ſanguine flower inſcrib'd with woe:
Ah! who hath reft (quoth he) my deareſt pledge?

Laſt

Laſt came, and laſt did go
The Pilot of the *Galilean* lake;
Two maſſy Keys he bore of metals twain,
(The Golden opes, the Iron ſhuts amain)
He ſhook his miter'd locks, and ſtern beſpake:
How well could I have ſpar'd for thee, young ſwain,
Anow of ſuch as for their bellies ſake
Creep and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reck'ning make,
Than how to ſcramble at the ſhearers feaſt,
And ſhove away the worthy bidden gueſt; [to hold
Blind mouths! that ſcarce themſelves know how
A ſheep-hook, or have learn'd aught elſe the leaſt
That to the faithful Herdman's art belongs!
What recks it them? What need they? They are fed;
And, when they liſt, their lean and flaſhy ſongs
Grate on their ſcrannel Pipes of wretched ſtraw;
The hungry ſheep look up, and are not fed,
But ſwoln with wind, and the rank miſt they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion ſpread:
Beſides what the grim Wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing ſaid
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to ſmite once, and ſmite no more.
Return, *Alpheus*, the dreed voice is paſt,
That ſhrunk thy ſtreams; Return, *Sicilian* Muſe
And call the Vales, and bid them hither caſt
Their Bells, and Flowrets of a thouſand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whiſpers uſe,
Of ſhades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whoſe freſh lap the ſwart-ſtar ſparely looks,

Throw

Throw hither all your quaint enamel'd eyes,
That on the green turf ſuck the honied ſhowers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe Primroſe, that forſaken dies,
The tufted Crow-toe, and pale Jeſſamine,
The white Pink and the Panſie ſtreakt with jeat,
The glowing Violet,
The muſk-roſe, and the well-attir'd Woodbine,
With Cowſlips wan that hang the penſive head,
And every flower that ſad embroidery wears:
Bid *Amaranthus* all his beauty ſhed,
And Daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To ſtrew the Laureat Herſe where *Lycid* lies.
For ſo to interpoſe a little eaſe,
Let our frail thoughts daily with falſe ſurmiſe.
Ah me! Whilſt thee the ſhores, and ſounding Seas
Waſh far away, where-e'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the ſtormy *Hebrides*,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Viſit'ſt the bottom of the monſtrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moiſt vows deny'd,
Sleep'ſt by the fable of *Bellerus* old,
Where the great Viſion of the guarded Mount
Looks tow'rd *Namancos* and *Bayona*'s hold;
Look homeward Angel now, and melt with ruth,
And, O ye *Dolphins*, waft the hapleſs youth.

Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more;
For *Lycidas*, your ſorrow, is not dead;
Sunk though he be beneath the watry floor,
So ſinks the day-ſtar in the Ocean-bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,

And

And tricks his beams, and with new-ſpangled Ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning ſky:
So *Lycidas* ſunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of him that walk'd the waves,
Where other groves, and other ſtreams along,
With *Nectar* pure his oozy Locks he laves,
And hears the unexpreſſive nuptial Song
In the bleſt Kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In ſolemn troops, and ſweet Societies,
That ſing, and ſinging in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, *Lycidas*, the Shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the ſhore,
In thy large recompenſe, and ſhalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus ſang the uncouth Swain to th' oaks and rills,
While the ſtill morn went out with Sandals grey;
He touch'd the tender ſtops of various Quills,
With eager thought warbling his *Doric* lay.
And now the Sun had ſtretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the Weſtern Bay:
At laſt he roſe, and twitch'd his Mantle blue;
To-morrow to freſh Woods, and Paſtures new.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE loathed Melancholy,
Of *Cerberus* and blackest midnight born,
In *Stygian* Cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy,
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-Raven sings;
There under *Ebon* shades, and low-brow'd Rocks,
As ragged as thy Locks,
In dark *Cimmerian* desart ever dwell.
But come thou Goddess fair and free,
In Heav'n ycleep'd *Euphrosyne*,
And by men heart-easing Mirth,
Whom lovely *Venus* at a birth
With two Sister-Graces more
To Ivy-crowned *Bacchus* bore;
Or whether (as some Sager sing)
The frolick Wind, that breathes the Spring,
Zephyr with *Aurora* playing,
As he met her once a Maying,
There on beds of Violets blue,
And fresh-blown Roses washt in dew,
Fill'd her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxsom, blith, and debonair;

Haste

Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest and youthful Jollity,
Quips and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
Such as hang on *Hebe's* cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport, that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter, holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
On the light fantastick toe:
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The Mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty;
And if I give the honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free;
To hear the Lark begin his flight,
And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tow'r in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spight of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the Sweet-Briar, or the Vine,
Or the twisted Eglantine:
While the Cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the Barn-door,
Stoutly struts his Dames before.
Oft list'ning how the Hounds and Horn
Chearly rouse the slumbring morn,
From the side of some Hoar Hill

Through the high wood echoing ſhrill.
Sometime walking not unſeen
By Hedge-row Elms, on Hillocks green,
Right againſt the Eaſtern gate,
Where the great Sun begins his ſtate,
Rob'd in Flames, and Amber light,
The Clouds in thouſand Liveries dight.
While the plow-man near at hand
Whiſtles o'er the furrow'd Land,
And the Milkmaid ſinging blithe,
And the Mower whets his ſcythe,
And every Shepherd tells his tale
Under the Hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleaſures,
Whilſt the Landſkip round it meaſures;
Ruſſet Lawns, and Fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do ſtray,
Mountains, on whoſe barren breaſt
The labouring Clouds do often reſt,
Meadows trim with Daiſies pide,
Shallow Brooks, and Rivers wide:
Towers and Battlements it ſees
Boſom'd high in tufted Trees,
Where perhaps ſome beauty lies,
The Cynoſure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by a Cottage chimney ſmokes,
From betwixt two aged Oaks,
Where *Corydon* and *Thyrſis* met,
Are at their ſavory dinner ſet
Of Herbs and other Country Meſſes,
Which the neat-handed *Phillis* dreſſes;

And

And then in haste her Bower she leaves,
With *Thestylis* to bind the Sheaves;
Or if the earlier Season lead
To the tann'd Haycock in the Mead,
Sometimes with secure delight
The up-land Hamlets will invite,
When the merry Bells ring round,
And the jocond rebecks sound
To many a Youth, and many a Maid,
Dancing in the chequer'd shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a Sunshine Holy-day,
Till the live-long day-light fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown Ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How *Fairy Mab* the junkets eat;
She was pincht, and pull'd, she said,
And he by Frier's Lanthorn led;
Tells how the drudging *Goblin* sweat,
To earn his Cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy Flail hath thresh'd the Corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end,
Then lies him down the Lubbar Fiend,
And stretch'd out all the Chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And Crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first Cock his Mattin rings.
Thus done the Tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering Winds soon lull'd asleep.
Towred Cities please us then,

And the busie humme of men,
Where throngs of Knights and Barons bold,
In weeds of Peace, high triumphs hold;
With store of Ladies, whose bright Eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
[illegible]
To win her Grace, whom all commend.
There let *Hymen* oft appear
In Saffron robe, with Taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask, and antique Pageantry,
Such sights as youthful Poets dream
On Summer Eves by [illegible] stream.
Then to the well-trod Stage anon,
If *Johnson*'s learned Sock be on,
Or sweetest *Shakespear*, fancy's child,
Warble his native Wood-notes wild;
And ever against eating Cares
Lap me in soft *Lydian* Aires,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting Soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running;
Untwisting all the chains that tye
The hidden soul of harmony:
That *Orpheus*' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a Bed
Of heapt *Elysian* flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear

Of

Of *Pluto*, to have quite set free
His half-regain'd *Eurydice*.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
The brood of folly without father bred,
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys;
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the Sun beams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle Pensioners of *Morpheus'* train.
But hail! thou Goddess, sage and holy,
Hail! divinest Melancholy,
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight;
And therefore to our weaker view
O'er-laid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem,
Prince *Memnon*'s Sister might beseem;
Or that starr'd *Ethiop* Queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above

The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended.
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-hair'd *Vesta* long of yore
To solitary *Saturn* bore;
His daughter she (in *Saturn*'s reign
Such mixture was not held a stain)
Oft in glimmering bow'rs, and glades,
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody *Ida*'s inmost grove,
While yet there was no fear of *Jove*.
Come pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steddy, and demure,
All in robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of *Cypress* Lawn,
O'er thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gate,
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to Marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast,
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Ay round about *Jove*'s Altar sing;
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim Gardens takes his pleasure.
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring

Him,

Him, that yon ſoars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The Cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hiſt along;
'Leſs *Philomel* will deign a Song,
In her ſweeteſt, ſadeſt plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night;
While *Cynthia* checks her Dragon yoke
Gently o'er th' accuſtom'd Oak.
Sweet Bird, that ſhunn'ſt the noiſe of folly,
Moſt muſical, moſt melancholy!
Thee chauntreſs oft the Woods among
I woo to hear thy Even-Song;
And miſſing thee, I walk unſeen
On the dry ſmooth-ſhaven Green,
To behold the wand'ring Moon,
Riding near her higheſt noon,
Like one that had been led aſtray
Through the Heav'n's wide pathleſs way;
And oft, as if her head ſhe bowed,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft on a Plat of riſing ground
I hear the far-off *Curfew* ſound,
Over ſome wide-water'd ſhoar,
Swinging ſlow with ſullen roar.
Or if the Air will not permit,
Some ſtill removed place will fit,
Where glowing Embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all reſort of mirth,
Save the Cricket on the hearth,

Or the Belman's [illegible] charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm,
Or let my Lamp at midnight hour
Be seen in some high lonely Tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great *Hermes*, or unspheer
The spirit of *Plato*, to unfold
What Worlds, or what vast Regions hold
Th' immortal Mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this heshly nook:
And of those *Dæmons*, that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With Planet, or with Element.
Sometimes let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd Pall come sweeping by,
Presenting *Thebes* or *Pelops* line,
Or the tale of *Troy* divine:
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the Buskin'd stage.
But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise *Musæus* from his bower,
Or bid the Soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew Iron tears down *Plato's* cheek,
And made Hell grant what Love did seek;
Or call up him that left half told
The story of *Cambuscan* bold,
Of *Camball*, and of *Algarsife*,
And who had *Canace* to wife,
That own'd the virtuous Ring and Glass,

And

And of the wondrous Horſe of Brass,
On which the *Tartar* King did ride;
And if ought elſe great *Bards* beside,
In ſage and ſolemn tunes have ſung,
Of Turnies and of Trophies hung;
Of Forests, and Inchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, night, oft ſee me in thy pale carere,
Till civil-ſuited Morn appear,
Not trickt and frounc't, as ſhe was wont,
With the Attick Boy to hunt,
But cherchef't in a comely Cloud,
While rocking Winds are piping loud,
Or uſher'd with a ſhower ſtill,
When the gruſt hath blown his fill,
Ending on the ruſling Leaves,
With minute drops from off the Eaves.
And when the Sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddeſs, bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And ſhadows brown, that *Sylvan* loves,
Of Pine, or monumental Oak,
Where the rude Ax with heaved ſtroke,
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt;
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in cloſe covert by ſome brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from Day's garriſh eye,
While the Bee with honied thigh,
That at her flow'ry work doth ſing,
And the Waters murmuring,
With ſuch conſent as they keep,

Entice

Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his Wings in airy stream,
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eye-lids laid:
And, as I wake, sweet musick breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the Wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious Cloyster's pale,
And love the high embowed Roof,
With antique Pillars massy proof,
And storied Windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing Organ blow,
To the full-voic'd Choir below,
In Service high, and Anthems clear,
As may with sweetness through mine ear
Dissolve me into extasies,
And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy Gown, and mossy Cell,
Where I may sit, and rightly spell
Of every Star that heav'n doth shew,
And every Herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like Prophetic strain.
These pleasures, *Melancholy*, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

ARCADES.

Part of an Entertainment preſented to the Counteſs Dowager of Derby at Harefield, *by ſome Noble Perſons of her Family, who appear on the Scene in Paſtoral Habit, moving toward the Seat of State, with this Song.*

I. SONG.

LOOK Nymphs, and Shepherds look!
What ſudden blaze of Majeſty
Is that which we from hence deſcry,
Too divine to be miſtook?
This, this is ſhe
To whom our vows and wiſhes bend,
Here our ſolemn ſearch hath end.
Fame, that her high worth to raiſe,
Seem'd erſt to laviſh and profuſe,
We may juſtly now accuſe
Of detraction from her praiſe;
Leſs than half we find expreſt,
Envy bid conceal the reſt.
Mark what radiant ſtate ſhe ſpreads,
In circle round her ſhining throne,

Shooting

Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,
Sitting like a Goddess bright,
In the center of her light.
Might she the wise *Latona* be,
Or the towred *Cybele*,
Mother of a hundred gods,
Juno dares not give her odds;
Who had thought this clime had held
A Deity so unparallel'd?

As they seem forward, the Genius of the Wood appears, and turning toward them, speaks.

Gen. STay gentle Swains; for tho' in this disguise,
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes,
Of famous *Arcady* ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine *Alpheus*, who by secret sluce,
Stole under Seas to meet his *Arethuse*;
And ye the breathing Roses of the Wood,
Fair silver-buskin'd Nymphs as great and good,
I know, this quest of yours, and free intent
Was all in honour and devotion meant
To the great Mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine,
And with all helpful service will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity;
And lead ye, where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching *Fame* hath left untold:
Which I full oft amidst these shades alone

Have

Have sat to wonder [illegible] gaze upon!
For know, by lot from *Jove*, I am the pow'r
Of this fair Wood, and live in Oaken bow'r,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With Ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove,
And all my Plants I save from nightly fit
Of noisom winds, and blasting Vapours chill;
And from the Boughs brush off the evil dew
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross dire-looking Planet smites,
Or hurtful Worm with crooked [illegible]
When Ev'ning gray doth rise, I [illegible] round
Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground,
And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumb'ring leaves, or tassel'd horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless;
But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath lockt up mortal Sense, then listen I
To the celestial *Sirens* harmony,
That sit upon the nine enfolded Spheres,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
And turn the Adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound,
Such sweet compulsion doth in musick lie,
To lull the daughters of *Necessity*,
And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
And the low world in measur'd motion draw
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
Of humane mould with gross unpurged ear;

And

And yet such musick worthiest were to blaze
The peerless height of her immortal praise,
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
If my inferior hand or voice could hit
Inimitable sounds: yet as we go,
What-e'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
I will assay, her worth to celebrate;
And so attend ye tow'rd her glittering state:
Where ye may all that are of noble stem
Approach, and kiss her sacred vestures hem.

II. SONG.

OER the smooth enamel'd green,
Where no print of step hath been,
Follow me, as I sing,
And touch the warbled string.
Under the shady roof
Of branching Elm star-proof,
Follow me.
I will bring you where she sits,
Clad in splendor, as besits
Her Deity.
Such a rural Queen
All *Arcadia* hath not seen.

III. SONG.

NYmphs and Shepherds, dance no more
By sandy *Ladon*'s lillied banks;
On old *Lycæus*, or *Cyllene* hoar
Trip no more in twilight ranks:
Though *Erymanth* your loss deplore,
A better soil shall give ye thanks.

From

From the ſteny *Menalus*
Bring your Flocks, and live with us;
Here ye ſhall have greater grace,
To ſerve the Lady of this place:
Though *Syrinx* your *Pan*'s Miſtreſs were,
Yet *Syrinx* well might wait on her.
Such a rural Queen
All *Arcadia* hath not ſeen.